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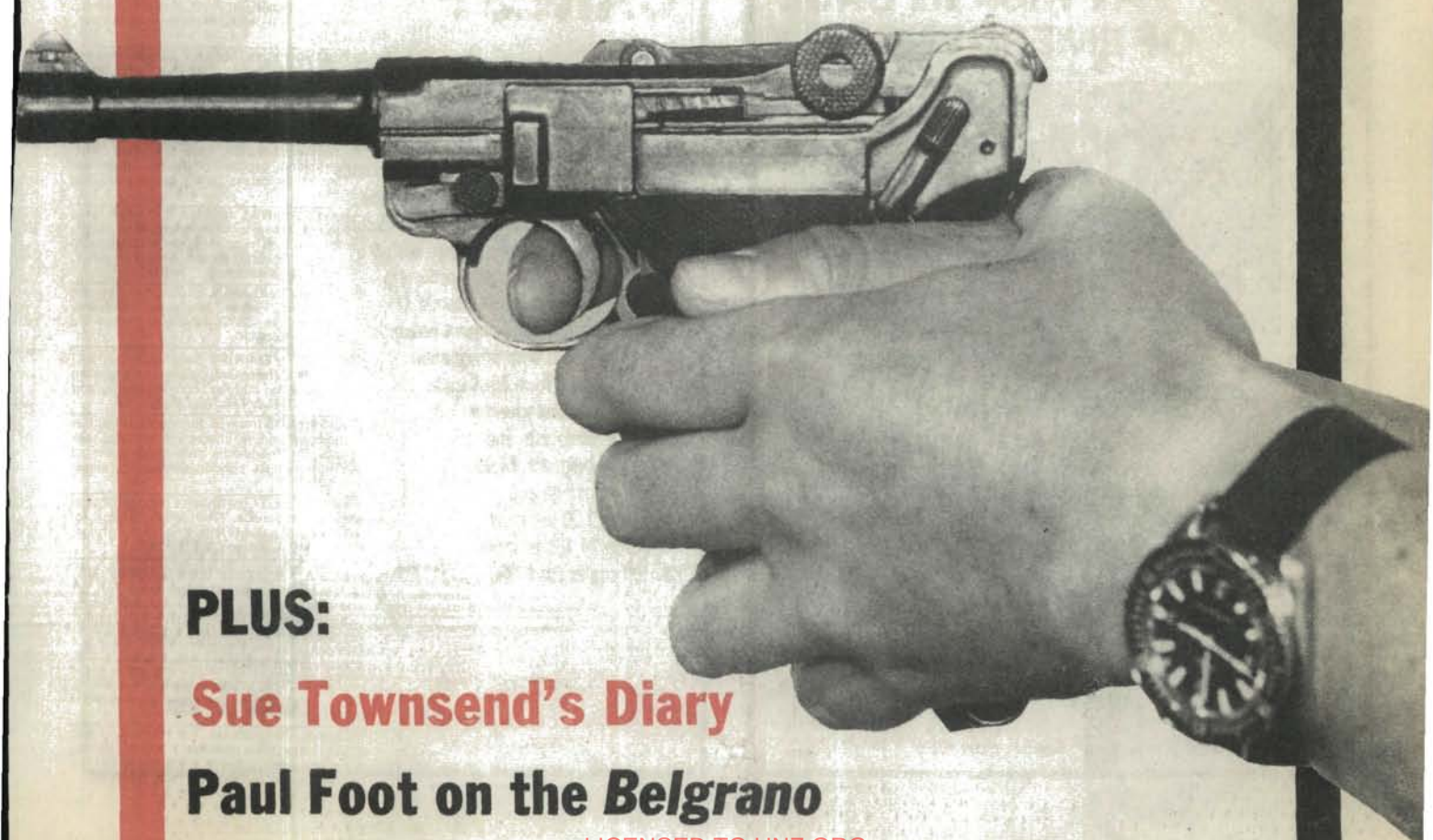
DIRTY WAR

An ex-Northern Ireland army officer tells all



PLUS:

Sue Townsend's Diary

Paul Foot on the *Belgrano*

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New Statesman

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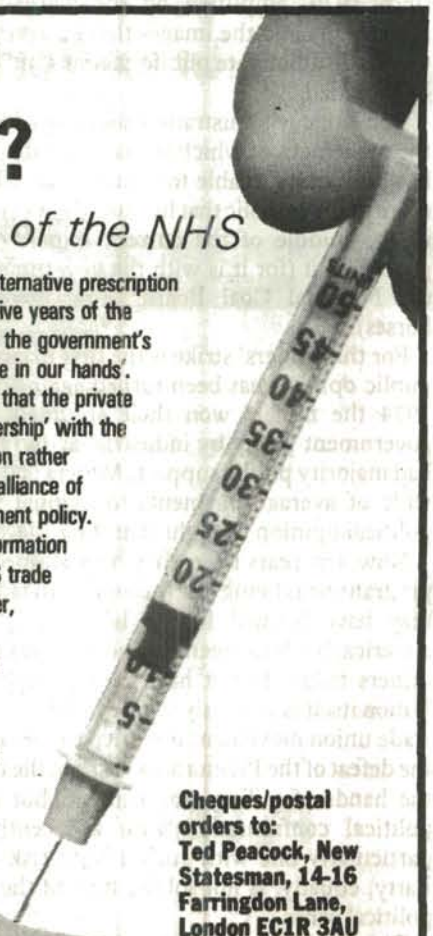

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New Statesman Vol 107 No 2772 4 May 1984

Len chucks it in

LEN MURRAY always used to say that he would carry on as general secretary of the TUC until he reached retiring age, *unless* he lost the confidence of the General Council, or came to the conclusion that there was nothing more that he could contribute to the trade union movement. He has not been in the most robust of health for some time, but he is the sort of person who would have worked on until he dropped, if he thought that there was any point in it for the movement. His announcement on Wednesday of his premature retirement later this year can, therefore, be taken as a measure of his depression about the current condition of British trade unionism.

For with trade unions (as in so many other areas of policy) Mrs Thatcher has succeeded in setting the agenda herself. For a variety of historical and political reasons, trade unions and trade unionism are 'unpopular', as measured by opinion polls. The Thatcher government has seized the political opening that this has offered to the Right to indulge in a sustained bout of 'union bashing'. The actual trade union legislation that this government has put and is putting onto the statute book may be much less draconian than the Tory Right would have liked — and in some of its aspects is plainly ineffective and irrelevant. But the message since 1979, amplified by the words that have appeared in newspapers and the images that have appeared on TV, has been that trade unions are public enemies and that their activities must be curtailed.

Len Murray's frustration (and it is widely shared) has been that the movement of which he has been the most prominent servant has been quite unable to counter that Thatcherite message. It is more than symbolic that he should have announced his resignation in the middle of the current miners' confrontation with the government (for it is with the government, Mr MacGregor and the National Coal Board being merely Thatcher's stalking horses).

For this miners' strike is the first in two decades where general public opinion has been turned against the NUM. In 1972 and 1974 the miners won their argument with a previous Tory government partly by industrial action but mainly because they had majority public support. Miners had slipped down the league table of average payments to manual workers and even non-political opinion thought that their place should be restored.

Now, ten years later, they have slipped again and a pit closure programme is being put through with tactics that Mr MacGregor may have learned in the labour relations jungles of North America, but have been alien in this country since the war. Yet the miners today do not have public support. Even the National Union itself is seriously divided. The support from the rest of the trade union movement is equivocal, obviously not wanting to see the defeat of the Praetorian Guard of the trade union movement at the hands of a Tory government, but uneasy at the idea of a political confrontation with a recently elected government, particularly one with such a high risk of failure. The Labour Party, equally, is not solidly behind the miners in any effective political sense.

This is the measure of the advance made by Thatcherism on this front since 1979. To face trade unions in general and the miners in particular, a *de facto* national police force has been created, without any debate and outside any formal framework of political accountability. Illegal action by the police in preventing miners moving about the country freely has been applauded by government ministers and thought proper by public opinion. Government-sponsored confrontation, in place of consultation and participation, is hailed as the new Thatcherite 'realism', instead of being seen for the long-term disaster that it really is for the future of the British economy.

LEN MURRAY ran a forlorn attempt in the years since 1979 to establish a new kind of relationship with this Tory government. It involved the acceptance of the reality that senior trade union figures were no longer co-opted members of the Whitehall establishment; but sought instead a practical role in working by negotiation to defend the interests of trade unionists — by positive membership of bodies like the National Economic Development Council and the Manpower Services Commission, and by genuine attempts to accommodate the political prejudices of the government over things like 'contracting out' of the political levy and union membership at GCHQ.

It was a tactic that failed, because the government kicked him in the teeth for his pains; and because the majority mood of the trade union movement has been to resist confrontational challenge from the government directly. But at a more fundamental level it was a tactic that was bound to fail. For the present structures of the TUC and its General Council are moribund. Their ethos is a stale one of smoke-filled rooms and power broking between barons and inward-looking committee politics and high-living worldliness. It is a world from which the kind of moral authority is missing that is required to represent the hopes and fears of working women and men in any sustained fight back against Thatcherism.

It will not be from Congress House downwards that the trade union movement finds a new confidence with which to reclaim its proper position in the political system. If the process is to happen, it will be from the grassroots up that the new energy and public support will come. The strategy of hoping to advance the interests of organised labour by waiting for the return of a Labour government and then nobbling it in the corridors of power is well and truly bankrupt. □

Special *NS* supplement on Europe: 18 May

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A private way to stop kidney deaths

THE GOVERNMENT is moving to end the scandal of preventable kidney failure deaths — but only in Wales and only by 'privatising' the dialysis service. Welsh Secretary Nicholas Edwards will choose who is to run new dialysis centres in Carmarthen, Bangor and Swansea in the next fortnight. The front runner is the Kidney Research Unit Foundation (KRUF), a non-profit-making charity, ahead of schemes from the NHS and the commercial sector.

KRUF promises to end the 140 deaths from kidney failure in Wales by providing dialysis for all. Its plan is a copy of the system in West Germany called Kuratorium, which has virtually ended death from kidney failure in the Federal Republic. The Kuratorium dialysis centres in Germany are open six days a week, often until the early hours of the morning to enable people with jobs to attend the centres. The centres have proved economic, with their small specialist teams of nurses, halving the cost of dialysis in hospitals. KRUF promises to make similar economies.

The KRUF centres will be funded by the NHS, but it will be the first time that the running of an entire medical service has been taken away from the NHS.

The unions, though viewing the situation with suspicion, have been unclear how to react: 'There's been a lack of consultation', grumbled COHSE regional officer Colin Thomson, 'but we are not too worried as long as the clinics come under the control of the local health authorities. And KRUF is a non-profit-making body.'

On the other hand, most doctors see the Kuratorium scheme as the first step towards ending a national scandal — the premature and preventable death of 2,000 people through kidney failure each year. Britain is 21st in the European league table of dialysis treatment per million people, behind poorer countries like Yugoslavia, Greece and Cyprus.

In parts of Britain, dialysis machines are in such short supply that doctors have to decide who lives and who dies. The practice has grown up of giving priority on dialysis machines to wage earners who have families to support. Children and the over-60s are the groups most commonly allowed to die — in some areas GPs don't bother to refer elderly kidney-failure patients to hospital.

Dr Ulrich Graeffe, head of Germany's most modern Kuratorium in Munster, said: 'In Germany, years ago we abolished the "death committees" which had to decide who lived and who died. In Britain, doctors still have to make these decisions. The situation should be changed as soon as possible. It's *not* a philosophical or a political problem — to let people die because of a lack of money is a sad thing.'

Professor A.W. Asscher of the Welsh National School of Medicine, who is helping with the evaluation of the schemes said: 'My colleagues in England are saying we have cracked the problem in Wales and it is bound to succeed. So why can't they have a similar scheme?'

Steve Iverson

Rugby's conscientious object

Anti-Apartheid demonstrators braved the rugby crowd at Twickenham last weekend to show their opposition to the English Rugby Football Union's tour of South Africa due to start on 19 May. The tour itself has virtually been relegated to reserve team status as so many of England's leading players have pulled out because of work commitments of 'personal' reasons'. Eight of England's players in the international against Wales in March are not going on the tour. But only one player, Ralph Knibbs of Bristol, has withdrawn on conscience grounds — and he's Black. ■

Drugs test case for obscenity law

PUBLISHING information on drugs such as cocaine, cannabis and magic mushrooms will become illegal if a trial at the Old Bailey on Tuesday results in convictions.

The trial will test the scope of the Obscene Publications Act, originally intended to cover pornography. It follows a series of at least 24 raids almost two years ago on bookshops around the country, and the seizure of 20,000 books and comics.

The main defendants are Knockabout Comics and Airlift Books. Knockabout, owned by Tony Bennett, will be 'in the dock' first as an application to have both cases heard together was rejected.

Of the 150 different titles seized, 24 are the subject of prosecution under section 2 of the Act which is the more serious charge and carries the right to a jury trial. They include books which portray drugs as 'fun', such as *Cooking with Cannabis, Psilocybin Magic Mushroom Growers' Guide* and *Cocaine Handbook*. Also seized, but subject to forfeiture proceedings at magistrates' courts rather than the Old Bailey hearing, were several academic treatises, such as *Peyote* published by the University of Texas and serious books on drugs such as *Mama Coca* by Anthony Henman which covers the history of the coca leaf in Colombia.

Henman is furious that 3,000 copies of *Mama Coca* have been sitting in a police warehouse since the raids in the summer of 1982. He told the *New Statesman*: 'In a sense it doesn't matter who wins at the trial because the police have effectively censored these books by taking them off the market for two years and putting the publishers in financial jeopardy.'

But if the prosecution is successful, one of the main sufferers will be the drugs advice agencies, often government funded, which want to publish information on drugs. Last year the Merseyside Drugs Council, a voluntary organisation, was warned off publishing a handbook for social workers and other professionals on the effects of 'magic mushrooms' (psilocybin) by the local drugs squad. Bill Skelton, who wrote the pamphlet, said: 'We were told that a prosecution might follow if we decided to publish. I was furious because the information on mushrooms is not available'. He is waiting for the result of the Old Bailey trial to decide whether to go ahead.

The prosecution hinges on whether the books 'corrupt and deprave' and the main witness will be Professor Griffith Edwards of the Addiction Research Unit, a virulent anti-drug campaigner. His testimony is likely to be crucial in a trial which depends very much on the attitude of the jury at a time when the rise in drug use, mainly heroin, is very much in the news. In fact, none of the publications on trial cover heroin, although William Burrough's *Junky* is among those titles seized.

To hedge its bets, the prosecution has also slapped on charges under the Misuse of Drugs Act alleging that the books encourage people to obtain drugs. Knockabout's solicitor, Bill Nash, thinks the argument is ridiculous: 'It's as if you will go and make gunpowder after reading a chemistry textbook,' he said.

Christian Wolmar

Young cuts up rough

DAVID YOUNG, the up-and-coming Chair of the Manpower Services Commission, and now tipped to become Margaret Thatcher's next 'Chief of Staff', has found himself dodging increasingly heavy flak over the stringent cuts in the government's youth training schemes.

At a private meeting last Thursday his commissioners, who represent employers, trades unions and local authorities, expressed their concern at the way in which some MSC officials are apparently ignoring the advice of their Area Manpower Boards, which exist to advise them on

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the detailed application of national policy.

At least three boards — Birmingham, Mid-Glamorgan, and South and West London — have rejected MSC packages of cuts in their areas, although Birmingham has now accepted a revised package. Several other boards have acquiesced to MSC plans, but registered strong objections in doing so.

The last straw came at Easter with Mr Young's announcement that he was over-ruling the South and West London Board's decision, and imposing his local officers' plans. The move incensed several of the board's TUC and CBI representatives, who immediately set about lobbying Young's commissioners. As a result Young has agreed to meet members of the board, to reconsider his decision to close down the 60-place Wandsworth Training Workshop.

Relations between MSC officials in SW London and Youth Training Scheme (YTS) staff have been further soured by the MSC's refusal to comment on an internal memorandum, leaked in March, which asked why SW London officials were only planning to pick up three-quarters of the Area's unemployed 16 year-old school leavers in 1984. Under the terms of YTS, the MSC undertakes to offer places to *all* young people in this group.

In addition, MSC officials, in recommending the closure of the Wandsworth Training Workshop, have flown in the face of all-party opposition to the move, and have ignored alternative plans for reductions in YTS places put forward by Tory-controlled Wandsworth Council.

The Wandsworth cuts are, however, only a small fraction of the 19,000 cuts in places in workshops and community projects nationally ordered by Employment Secretary Tom King. Among the schemes to suffer most are those run by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO), who will lose 428 of their 2,416 places nationally, and who will have to make around 50 staff redundant; and the YMCA, whose 'Training for Life' scheme is being cut nationally by 773 places, and which has seven projects facing shutdown all over England. A further 225-place scheme in Doncaster, Metro Action Central, is closing in the next few weeks.

David Young's intervention in Wandsworth is already being ascribed to his over-enthusiasm to fulfil a government policy of shunting school leavers into the cheaper, employer-led schemes, at the expense of many of the most successful — but more expensive — workshops and community projects. And, as Wandsworth's Council's leader, Tory Paul Beresford warned, the Wandsworth cuts will seriously affect the 'already shaky confidence' of ethnic minorities and the general public in YTS.

Quentin McDermott

MISCELLANY

Not Wright

Voting began this week for the new leader of the Transport and General, Britain's largest union, with much of the campaign being waged in the press. George Wright, who protests loudly that he is not the right-wing candidate, has been getting strong backing from the *Sun* and the *News of the World*. In the *Sun*'s case, this has taken the form of smearing his opponent, Ron Todd, who protests equally loudly that he is not the left-wing candidate ('Reds back Ron for top union job!'); in the case of the *News of the World* it took the form of a panegyric by Woodrow Wyatt. This may not be an orchestrated campaign, but the industrial correspondents of several papers were invited to have dinner with Wright last month. Just a small affair, you understand, at the House of Lords, at the invitation of Lord Brooks of Tremorfa, Wright's press secretary (as John Brooks, he was Jim Callaghan's election agent in 1970 and 1979). Wright also managed to get his alleged potential 'partnership' with Neil Kinnock into both the *Sunday Times* and the *Observer*. The *Sunday Times* went so far as to say that Kinnock was backing Wright in the election. If this is true, then Kinnock is a forgiving person indeed. Five years ago Wright, who as Welsh regional secretary of the union ran the unsuccessful Welsh devolution campaign, wanted Kinnock removed as a TGWU-sponsored MP, because Kinnock was against devolution.

Jenkin's bricks

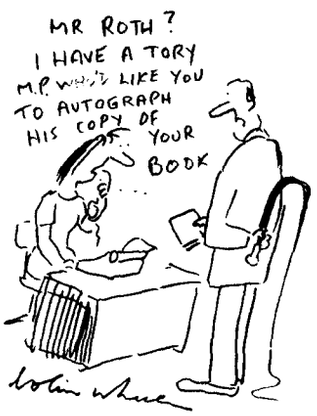
As a dropper of bricks, Patrick Jenkin has never regained the form he displayed during the height of the last miners' strike (younger readers may not recall that earlier experiment with Tory monetarism, called the 'three-day week'). Then, as junior energy minister, he claimed to brush his teeth in the dark to save electricity. When an early-rising reporter checked this out, the Jenkin home was found to be ablaze with lights. The current unpopular Bills for wrecking local government are so disastrous that minor slips are neither here nor there as Jenkin glumly tries to steer his cargo through parliament. But they have distracted attention from his other responsibility as environment minister, namely housing. The government's record is a disgrace. In his first six months at the DoE, only 19,700 new council homes were started, compared with 27,400 in the previous six months. (Over 50,000 starts were made in the last six months of the Labour government.) All the more offensive, then, that Jenkins should add 'bricklaying' to his short list of hobbies in this year's **Who's Who** entry.

Tiff off

The unconvincing exchange of letters last weekend, ending the 'lovers' tiff' between Tiny Rowland and Tiny Trelford, reminded close students of Fleet Street of Rupert Murdoch's immortal pronouncement: 'Reports in competitive newspapers that Harold Evans is about to be replaced as editor of *The Times* are malicious, self-serving and wrong'. That was just five weeks before Evans finally went. Our moles at the *Observer* say that Rowland was never serious about selling to Robert Maxwell (though some, like deputy editor Anthony Howard, became positively enthusiastic about the idea of passing into Maxwell's private Pergamon empire). They also reveal that Trelford was resigned by the weekend to a parting of his way with Rowland's, and that this will not be resisted by the majority of the paper's five 'independent' directors — despite the fact that Rowland says that he thinks that they have no future part to play and will soon ask them to resign. 'They were chosen at two in the morning at the Department of Trade with the help of a pin and a two-year-old copy of *Who's Who*,' he said. Lonrho's front runner as Trelford's successor in due course is Charlie Wilson, currently executive editor of *The Times* and formerly editor of the Glasgow *Sunday Standard*. Friends and enemies alike describe Charlie as 'an intelligent tabloid man.'

Low profiles

Fighting through a barrage of solicitors' letters threatening legal action, Andrew Roth has produced the first volume, A-D, of his *Parliamentary Profiles*. Roth believes that all MPs are important, not just



the media-conscious front-benchers and 'characters', and he diligently records their business interests, foibles and policy positions. The book includes such gems as an MP who describes himself as 'clairvoyant' and then mis-guessed the date of the 1979 general election (John Corrie); and the fact that Leon Brittan tried for 14 safe Tory seats before finally being selected to fight Whitby in 1972. And who remembers, for instance, that Dr Rhodes Boyson was councillor? Roth will infuriate Labour MP Tony Banks by drawing attention to the fact that his father was a diplomat, and Tory Jim Couchman is unlikely to welcome his description as a 'third generation publican'. But the real value of Roth's directory is its accumulation of facts about the Tory Right, such as who backed Enoch Powell in the late 1960s (the list includes Sir Bernard Braine, Robert Adley and William Benyon). It recalls that Alan Clark and Vivian Bendall were removed from the candidates' list in 1969 and 1973 respectively because they were too reactionary, and it quotes a few key opinions long since suppressed, such as Anthony Beaumont-Dark's 'I wouldn't want 20 coloured people living next door' (1969). It also restores some of the limelight deserved by the utterly colourless Nicholas Budgen, who succeeded his mentor Enoch Powell as MP for Wolverhampton SW when he stood down in 1974. Budgen said at the time that he believed 'mass immigration in the late 1950s and early 1960s was a grave mistake' and went on to oppose the entry of Asian male fiancés, was against getting rid of the colour bar in private clubs and in 1979 demanded a register of aliens. Roth records that Budgen is the grandson of the Shropshire parson who baptised Enoch Powell.

Blackburn's rover

Blackburn hasn't seen such fun and games since Rovers won the championship 25 years ago. First, six Militants are expelled from the Labour Party on the evidence of infiltrator Michael Gregory. And now Gregory himself has resigned the Labour whip on the council just a few days before the council elections. The Militant Tendency is over the moon. A huge story in the current *Militant* proclaims 'Witch-hunter votes with Tories', claiming it undermines the credibility of the 'supergrass'. Indeed, there were various problems with Gregory's evidence, not least the unstable and attention-seeking character of Gregory himself. But Labour's national executive inquiry dismissed the doubts last week, saying 'we found it rang true'. Now, the national executive may have to intervene in Blackburn again as Gregory says he hasn't resigned from the party, only the local Labour group whip. In a similar situation in Tower Hamlets, a councillor was required by the national executive to rejoin the Labour group or be expelled from the party. Maybe Gregory could join up with the expelled 'Blackburn Six' and set up a joint defence committee.

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Reagan's return to roots unearths Irish animosity

THE IRISH government is now seriously worried about the possibility of widespread protests when President Reagan arrives in the country to search out his ancestral roots next month.

Anger at the visit already extends beyond the Left to embrace a coalition of potentially embarrassing demonstrators. Last week the two main teachers' unions passed resolutions at their annual conference condemning the visit. Dr Aodghan O'Rahilly, a distinguished academic whose father was one of the leaders of the Easter 1916 Rising, has appealed to fellow graduates to join him in burning their degrees in protest against the National University of Ireland's decision to confer an honorary doctorate on the President. The Workers Party has pledged its support for 'massive, peaceful and orderly demonstrations' designed to show Irish people's opposition to Mr Reagan's foreign policies.

In an effort to defuse the issue the Irish Foreign Minister, Peter Barry, made a speech in his native Cork last weekend firmly reiterating the government's reservations about US policy in Central America. The venue was a conference organised by the Univeristy of Cork to commemorate the death of Jean Donovan, an American missionary who was murdered in El Salvador in 1980 and who had studied at the university.

The President's visit to Ireland is part of a vote-catching strategy designed to appeal to US Catholics and Irish Americans. During his visit to Ballyporeen, his great grandfather's birthplace, Mr Reagan will attend mass at the local Catholic church — along with 320 journalists.

But the Church may turn out to be something of a headache. Irish priests and nuns, many of them former missionaries, have been to the fore in demonstrations against American foreign policy. Bishop Eamon Casey of Galway, where President Reagan is scheduled to make his first public appearance, is a forthright critic of US intervention in Central America.

The Irish government is understandably anxious about offending President Reagan. In recent years considerable diplomatic energy has been devoted to building up Republican support in the United States for the Irish government's stance on Northern Ireland — particularly difficult given the Republican propensity to listen to the British government's view on the matter. This is regarded as particularly important just now when Dublin is concerned to muster international sympathy for the report of the New Ireland Forum. And it will be, to say the least, embarrassing if the 'ould country' seems to offer a less than traditional Irish welcome to Reagan.

Mary Holland

Best by-election Labour lead since 1981

LABOUR established a clear lead over both the Conservatives and the Liberal/SDP Alliance in council by-elections held in April. The Alliance had a particularly poor month, receiving its lowest share of the vote in any month since 1981 and winning only four out of 24 seats.

Altogether 43,497 votes were cast in three-cornered contests:

Labour	16,227	37.3%
Conservative	15,036	34.6%
Liberal/SDP	10,190	23.4%
Others	2,044	4.7%

Labour's 2.7 per cent lead is the biggest in any month since the *NS* started collecting council by-election figures in June 1981 — and, if anything, slightly underestimates the party's performance, as there was a slight Conservative bias in the pattern of seats fought.

April's gains and losses are as follows:

	Seats defended	*Seats lost*	*Seats gained*	*Seats held now*
Con	13	6	1	8
Lab	8	1	4	11
Lib	2	0	2	4
Others	1	1	1	1

It has been a poor year for the Conservatives so far. Since January, the party has lost 18 of the 43 seats it was defending and gained only four seats.

For the Alliance, 23 per cent is well below the threshold at which it makes substantial gains. April's by-elections provided further evidence of the Alliance's internal difficulties. In Darlington's Northgate North Ward, Liberals and Social Democrats could not agree who should stand and both parties fielded candidates: the Liberal obtained 311 votes and came second, while the Social Democrat got just 105 and finished fourth behind the Tory.

Peter Kellner

Council scoreboard

5 April		19 April	
Vale Royal DC	LAB GAIN (Con)	**Windsor & Maidenhead DC**	Con hold
North Devon DC	LIB GAIN (Con)		
The Wrekin DC	IND LAB GAIN (Lab)	25 April	
Darlington DC	Lab hold	**Mid-Glamorgan CC**	Lab hold
Rushcliffe DC	Con hold		
		26 April	
12 April		**Leics CC**	CON GAIN (Ind)
Haringey LBC	LAB GAIN (Con)	**Northants CC**	Con hold
Haringey LBC	LAB GAIN (Con)	**Northampton DC**	Lab hold
Haringey LBC	LAB GAIN (Con)	**Northampton DC**	Lab hold
South Ribble DC	LIB GAIN (Con)	**Ealing LBC**	Lab hold
Lichfield DC	Lab hold	**Sedgemoor DC**	Lib hold
Somerset CC	Lab hold	**Chiltern DC**	Con hold
South Oxon DC	Lib hold	**Yeovil DC**	Con hold
Devon CC	Con hold		
Bromley LBC	Con hold		

Police have few complaints

IF YOU HAVE a complaint to make to the police, you've got to be patient. The Police Complaints Board Annual Report for 1983 published last week shows that in London, for example, it took 217 days for the police to submit cases to the Board and an average of 46 days after that for the Board to make a decision.

The number of complaints received overall dropped slightly from 7,744 in 1982 to 7,399 in 1983, though there were increases in the Thames Valley and Metropolitan police areas. Overall, the Board recommended disciplinary charges in 34 cases compared with 46 in 1982.

This is the last annual report of the Complaints Board, as under the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill currently in Parliament it will be replaced by a 'Police Complaints Authority' with broadly the same functions, except for the additional responsibility of supervising the investigation of serious complaints. The police will continue to be responsible for the actual investigation of all complaints.

The report contains details of a survey by the Board of 50 cases in 1982/3 in which it recommended disciplinary charges. In about half, the officers pleaded guilty, but of the rest, only one was found guilty. The unlikelihood of officers who deny charges being found guilty puts in perspective the police demands for legal representation in disciplinary hearings which have now been incorporated into the Bill (see *NS* news, 16 March). Indeed, the Board points out that unrepresented members of the public making complaints may be at a disadvantage at hearings when facing the police's professional advocates.

Louise Christian

Rate-capping damages health

RATE-CAPPING should carry a government health warning, according to a new report by an eminent specialist in community medicine.

Dr Peter Draper says that many local authority services likely to be hit by the legislation contribute to the prevention of disease and accidents and to the promotion of mental and social well-being.

These range from food inspection, monitoring pollution and health and safety at work to the provision of housing which is linked to mental and physical health. Community care is vital to many elderly people and young children. Demands for it are increasing because of the government's own policy to close large psychiatric and mental handicap hospitals and switch care into the community.

Dr Draper, former director of the Unit for the Study of Health Policy at Guy's Hospital Medical School in London, says: 'The overwhelming conclusion to be drawn from this information and these consultations is one of grave concern. Reductions in health-relevant services would jeopardise prevention and the promotion of health and significantly worsen community care services which are already under considerable pressure'.

The rate-capping plans, currently in the committee stage at the House of Lords, would be 'catastrophic' for those councils which will face huge bills when Victorian care institutions on the outskirts of London are shut and people transferred back into inner London.

The district medical officer for West Lambeth warns of the effect of rate-capping on residential care: 'We envisage taking responsibility in the community for some 400 elderly, mentally ill and handicapped people over the next 10 years. We are utterly dependent on the local authority and its ability to support these initiatives'.

A CHC secretary says rate-capping could lead to the collapse of many voluntary organisations in the fields of community transport, group homes, the disabled, problem drug users, alcoholics and the single homeless — all currently grant-aided. The inner London Labour boroughs most 'at risk' from the legislation are also the poorest and need higher than average levels of services.

Ironically, this was exactly the conclusion of an authoratitive 1981 report on Primary Health Care in Inner London by Professor Donald Acheson, now the government's Chief Medical Officer of England and Wales.

Phil Cohen

The Health Implications of Rate-Capping, £2 *from The Association of London Authorities, Room 692, County Hall, London SE1 7PB.*

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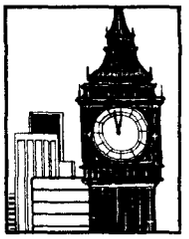

PETER KELLNER Political Editor

Mrs Thatcher's vision of a fifteen-year Reich

FIVE YEARS after Mrs Thatcher entered Downing Street, there are three remarkable things about her premiership. The first is that the Conservatives hold a clear lead in the opinion polls. The second is that she talks so enthusiastically about leading the Conservatives into the next election and beyond. The third is that neither of those first two facts caused any surprise.

By hallowed tradition, the best times for any Prime Minister have long since passed before five years are up. Five years after Clement Attlee became Prime Minister, Labour had an uncomfortably thin majority in the Commons and was less than 18 months away from losing office. Five years after Harold Macmillan became Prime Minister, we were on the eve of the Orpington by-election and the slow disintegration of Conservative rule. Five years after Harold Wilson became Prime Minister, Labour was trailing miles behind the Conservatives and losing almost every electoral contest in sight. Five years after Edward Heath became Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher had already succeeded him as Conservative leader.

What can explain Mrs Thatcher's resilience today? In her anniversary statement last weekend she described 'a considerable sense of achievement and encouragement, and a feeling that Britain has found a new confidence and purpose'. For the three million who are without work and the thousands of businesses that have gone bust those seem strange words. Yet there is no reason to doubt that she believes them. (Contrary to widespread opinion, politicians do usually mean what they say: when they say something absurd, it is generally because their views really are absurd.) More to the point, a substantial number of voters are willing to trust Mrs Thatcher's judgment.

There is another reason for Mrs Thatcher to feel confident. She continues to dictate the terms of political debate more comprehensively than any Prime Minister for many years. She prides herself on being tough, radical and abrasive. The opposition parties deplore those very qualities, but they do not on the whole question them. On this, as on some other issues, both sides have an interest in exaggeration: Tories in order to praise, Labour in order to damn. Neither side is inclined to explore the more mundane possibility that Mrs Thatcher is, in some respects, a second-rate politician who muddles along making rather less difference to Britain's industrial climate or social fabric than either her supporters or her opponents claim.

On the economy, insofar as things are recognisably different from how they were five years ago, it is almost wholly the consequence of recession rather than radical policy innovation. In her anniversary statement, Mrs Thatcher claimed the credit for low inflation and interest rates, 4½ per cent rise in the past year in industrial output and rising profits. These are all perfectly predictable features of an economy working well below capacity, but making a gradual recovery from the worst decline in industrial output on record. The trick is to sustain the rate of output and profits increase, and to keep inflation and interest rates down, when unemployment is low: there is no evidence that Mrs Thatcher knows how to do it.

Where Mrs Thatcher did promise radical measures five years go was in public spending. The Conservatives' 1979 election manifesto promised to reduce public expenditure as a proportion of gross domestic product. In fact, the share has risen substantially; and Mrs Thatcher herself now admits that at the next election it will still be above the share she inherited from Labour. Most of this increase is explained by the cost of paying for the recession, in terms of higher unemployment and social security payments. Yet the fact remains that public spending in 1983/84 was some £16 billion higher in real terms than the government originally planned.

Even money supply has departed wildly from the government's original promise. 'Proper monetary discipline is essential' said the 1979 manifesto: yet money supply has doubled in the past five years.

Nor has the welfare state undergone quite the transformation that either Right or Left would claim. More should, and could, be spent on health and education, to be sure: but both services are recognisably similar to the way they were five years ago. In education — as elsewhere — Mrs Thatcher has failed in her radical intentions. In 1979 the Conservative manifesto promised to halt 'the destruction of good schools' — i.e., grammar schools. In fact the switch from selective to comprehensive education has continued unabated: the proportion of children attending grammar schools is now lower than ever and those Tory education authorities that have tried to revive them have seen their ambitions crushed by opposition from middle-class parents.

SO IS MRS THATCHER simply another middle-of-the-road Prime Minister in disguise? By no means. But we must distinguish carefully her economic and social policies, which are incompetent rather than radical, from her policies concerning the nature of the State and the distribution of power. It is here, rather than in money supply figures, or the condition of the health service, that the true right-wing credentials of the Prime Minister are to be found.

In economic and social policies the chasm between rhetoric and reality can be charted with ease. But when it comes to the police or the armed forces or the trade unions or local councils or attitudes to government secrecy, rhetoric and reality fuses into one. Mrs Thatcher, more than any recent Prime Minister, looks upon dissent with that special loathing which distinguishes a dictator from a democrat. The language of her anniversary statement reveals the point with possibly unintended clarity:

> I believe that five years ago the British people made me Prime Minister primarily because they sensed that socialism had been leading them to a life of debilitating dependence on the state . . . When I look back over those five years — and look forward to the next — I know that each day will test the nerve and resolve of the Prime Minister and her cabinet.

It is the kind of language that fits the tradition of the Thirties' dictators rather than post-war democrats: the highly personalised description of the country's political destiny; the assertion that what went before was a danger that needed to be removed; the absence of any concern with tolerance and co-operation; the exaltation of 'nerve and resolve' as the most praiseworthy of political qualities.

Yet there are other words in Mrs Thatcher's vocabulary that are designed to persuade us that she is really a democrat: words like 'freedom' and 'independence'. And there are actions she has taken to give substance to that more benign image. In particular in seeking to require unions to hold more elections she is doing something that is both popular with many trade unionsists and something that is hard to condemn as anti-democratic. There are debating-point responses that can be made: for example that Mrs Thatcher would never dream of submitting Conservative Central Office to the same democratic disciplines, by (say) holding a ballot to choose the party's chairman. But, as every child is taught, two wrongs do not make a right: trade unions ought to be run more democratically, however Conservative Central Office is run.

By spicing her authoritarian menu with one or two democratic dishes, Mrs Thatcher has gone far to weakening Labour's credibility as an opposition. Or, rather, Labour has allowed itself to be weakened. By opposing those measures that have some democratic validity, Labour's anger at other times at the government's creeping authoritarianism loses its force. Thus when Gerald Kaufman rightly condemns the way the police are obstructing the movement of miners, he is widely seen as a defender of sectional interests rather than an advocate of civil liberties. As long as Mrs Thatcher is able to dismiss Labour's attachment to democracy in this way, her authoritarianism will lack effective challenge. □

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Victims of the 'dirty war

Kidnap plots, assassination, forgery, lethal incompetence, even 'political' psychiatry . . . A former Army intelligence office in Northern Ireland reveals the inside story of the Army's 'dirty tricks' department in Ulster — in the first of a series of reports by Duncan Campbell

A FORMER INTELLIGENCE OFFICER who served in Northern Ireland in 1974 and 1975 has revealed details of 'dirty tricks' by the Army in Ireland. Captain Fred Holroyd was an intelligence specialist in Northern Ireland for nearly two years. The details of his allegations have been checked over six months. We have spoken to eye-witnesses and others personally involved in Holroyd's reports. These activities range, says Holroyd, from the disreputable to the entirely illegal — and were conducted on both sides of the Irish border.

Since 1982, a special team from the Royal Ulster Constabulary, led by Detective Superintendent George Caskey, has been investigating Holroyd's allegations of illegal Army activities. Its report, a lengthy 900-page dossier, was submitted earlier this year to Northern Ireland's Director of Public Prosecutions. Last month, the DPP delayed his final decision on the report and asked the team to carry out more extensive investigations of some of the dozen or so cases that Holroyd has submitted. Until the DPP announces his decision on the cases concerned, neither the RUC nor the Ministry of Defence are willing to comment publicly on Holroyd's revelations. But we have learned from Army sources that the Defence Ministry last year ordered a special and separate enquiry by its own security officials into the 'dirty war' allegations.

As a Military Intelligence Officer in Northern Ireland, Holroyd was on undercover attachment to the RUC Special Branch office in Portadown, west of Belfast. He worked in close liaison with the headquarters of the Army's 3rd Brigade, which was militarily responsible for the highly dangerous territory along the southern border — the 'bandit country' of South Armagh.

Captain Holroyd himself ultimately became a victim of the often bitter rivalry between different parts of the security apparatus. Army staff contrived to have him abruptly removed from his post in May 1975, as an alleged psychiatric casualty whose 'mental stability' could be examined only in the safety and security of a hospital in England — a slur which was subsequently deleted from his official record, but which has left him bitter about the Army. He resigned his commission in 1976 and joined the then Rhodesian Army.

Following his removal from Northern Ireland, Holroyd repeatedly asked for an investigation both of his own treatment and of the methods employed by British intelligence agents and officials in the North. Former Army and police colleagues still hold Holroyd in high esteem. In 1977, RUC Assistant Chief Constable Charles Rogers — who was put in charge of the RUC's anti-terrorist campaign following the 'Darkley Church' killings last Christmas — wrote that Holroyd was a 'man of unquestionable loyalty, outstanding courage with a devotion to duty that one looks for but rarely finds today'. In short, Holroyd was determined, respected, and to many a hero.

unquestionable loyalty, devotion to duty that one rarely finds today.

Andrew Ward/Report

Fred Holroyd: his RUC chief says that his 'success record against terrorists has not been equalled before or since'

SO WAS ANOTHER Army officer — Captain Robert Nairac of the Special Air Services. In 1979, Nairac was posthumously awarded the George Cross, two years after being kidnapped and assassinated by the IRA while on undercover operations in South Armagh. In 1975 Nairac told Holroyd how he had carried out a political assassination in the Irish Republic.

Assassination

Robert Nairac first arrived in Northern Ireland early in 1974, with a troop of about 30 men from the SAS Regiment's Hereford base. At the time, the government was denying that the SAS were in Northern Ireland at all — so they were disguised as the 'Survey Troop' of the Royal Engineers. They were based at Castledillon, near Armagh, in a secluded country house and estate that had previous y been a sanatorium.

The SAS unit's commander was Captain Julian A. Ball, who had joined the SAS from the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Robert Nairac from the elite Grenadier Guards, at first a lieutenant, was his second-in-command. Nairac was new to the SAS and Northern Ireland, but had been specially trained by both the Army and the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) for work in Ireland. Ball had already served extensively in Belfast, winning a Military Cross. A former Army officer who served with Ball in Belfast has described him as an 'irresponsible cowboy'.

According to the official ('Restricted') manual on 'Counter-Revolutionary Operations', the SAS's tasks included the 'infiltration of . . . assassination parties . . . into insurgent held areas', and 'liaison with . . . forces operating against the common enemy'. Ball and Nairac visited intelligence officers in the Armagh areas, including Holroyd in Portadown, asking for suggestions of worthwhile intelligence targets. They told Holroyd that they were under the direct orders

Captain Holroyd appeared on the Channel 4 programme, *Diverse Reports*, on Wednesday. The programme was researched and reported by Christopher Hird and Duncan Campbell.

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of SIS and army headquarters intelligence staff.

On 10 January 1975, in a remote mountain-side farmhouse in County Monaghan, a mile south of the Irish border, a leading republican, John Francis Green, was murdered. Careful planning and good intelligence was evident in his killing, for he had only visited the farm at short notice. The killers waited until Green was alone and then burst in on him, emptying the contents of two pistols into him.

Soon afterwards, Captain Nairac called routinely on Holroyd at the Army's Mahon Road camp in Portadown. The subject of Green's death came up — Green, aged 27, a local republican hero after an escape from internment in Long Kesh in 1973, had by 1975 become the IRA commander in North Armagh. After an SAS sergeant major left the room, Nairac said that he had killed Green. When Holroyd expressed disbelief, Nairac produced a colour Polaroid of Green's bloodsoaked body, taken soon after his death. Green was pictured from the waist up, lying on his back. With some reluctance, Nairac allowed Holroyd to keep the picture. It remained in Holroyd's photo album until 1982, when it was handed over to Superintendent Caskey of the RUC.

Who took the Polaroid picture is still a mystery. Nairac implied that he had done so. RUC detectives investigating the case suggested to Captain Holroyd in 1983 that the picture had been taken by the Irish Police. But a very senior Garda source says that no Garda officer in the area had either the equipment or any official reason to take such a picture. He said that the morning after the crime, a fully equipped Garda photographic team travelled up from Dublin, and took pictures using standard (black and white) film.

Nairac told Holroyd that he and two other men had done the killing. He then described in detail how they had crossed the border during the evening and driven down a country road. Green was at first in the company of farmer Gerry Carville — whose house had long been an IRA 'safe house'. But the old farmer, said Nairac, had left at a set time, known to the killers. One man stayed with the car, while the other two crept up a lane to the isolated farm and watched Green through an uncurtained window. They kicked down the door and shot him repeatedly, emptying one of the guns into his body as he lay dying.

Nairac's account of the killing, as provided to Holroyd, is chillingly exact. Irish police investigations produced reports of an unknown vehicle in the area at the time of the killing — a white Mercedes or Audi — which eyewitnesses thought contained three men. Farmer Gerry Carville has told us that for more than a month he had left his farm at the same time each evening to tend a neighbour's cow. In the last month it has been revealed that, at the time, there were two well-placed informers working for British security inside IRA circles in the nearby town of Castleblayney.

Garda investigation of the killing confirmed many aspects of Nairac's account. The room in which John Francis Green was shot was indeed uncurtained at the time. The front door frame was kicked in, and still bears the cracks. Forensic experts, whose reports we have also seen, later established that two guns were used to shoot Green; one is thought to be a Luger, the other a Spanish-made Star automatic pistol.

Top: Captain Robert Nairac of the SAS; Bottom: John Francis Green, Provisional IRA commander in Armagh, whom Nairac claimed to have assassinated on the territory of the Irish Republic; Centre, scene of the Green killing — the lonely Carville farm, on the slopes of Mulleyash Mountain, County Monaghan.

AT FIRST, the Garda in the Republic suspected that other local IRA elements might have killed Green. Green had recently been asking questions about the proceeds of a series of bank robberies in Northern Ireland. The Royal Ulster Constabulary continues to put forward a theory that Green was killed by a deranged northern Protestant, called Elliott, who believed that his brother had been killed on Carville's farm — and who had come with a second, unknown man to kill Carville, not Green.

But we have established from a confidential police source that the RUC obtained evidence in 1975 conclusively linking the Green killing to a series of notorious murders carried out by persons closely linked to the Protestant extremist paramilitary organisation, the Ulster Volunteer Force. The link is the cartridges from the Star automatic pistol found at the scene of the killing. With the secret help of the Garda, these were tested by a scientist attached to the RUC forensic staff, Norman Tulip, and found to be identical with cartridges left at the scene of four sectarian murders, committed between 1973 and 1976. These included perhaps the most notorious killing of the 1970s — the slaughter in July 1975 of members of the Catholic Miami Showband.

Robert Nairac, like many other army personnel in Northern Ireland (including Holroyd), obtained and sometimes carried personal 'unattributable' weapons. The serial numbers and firing characteristics of such guns were not officially recorded. During the trial of Nairac's killers in 1977, his then commanding officer told the Dublin Court that a 'personal pistol', apart from his official issue Browning automatic, had been found in Nairac's room after his death.

The Caskey Report, it is believed, does not suggest that Holroyd is wrong in his recollections, but quotes other Army officers instead in an attempt to show that Nairac was a braggard, inventing his participation in the Green murder. Some RUC officers have also tried to raise doubts as to whether Nairac was ever a member of the SAS. Holroyd says that he has come under intense pressure from the RUC to withdraw his murder accusation against Nairac. He refuses to do so.

Obtaining evidence affecting Nairac's story has been difficult, because of the death or disappearance of almost everyone involved. Elliott, the RUC's supposed suspect, was himself killed in 1979. Captain Ball left the Army to become a British government security adviser, and has since reportedly died in a traffic accident. Nairac and Ball's SAS company sergeant major is said by the RUC to be 'untraceable'. Craig Smellie, in 1974 the Secret Service 'controller' at the Army HQ at Lisburn, left to become SIS Chief of Station in Athens, and has also since died. Nairac himself left the SAS in 1976, but stayed on in Northern Ireland as a military intelligence liaison officer in Bessbrook and was killed in 1977. His death means that the final story of the Green assassination may never be told. But the Army has a clear case to answer.

Intelligence disaster

Another of Holroyd's accounts concerns a plan to discover the IRA's major escape route from Belfast for wounded and wanted men. The plan went wrong, resulting in two, and possibly five, deaths.

Sergeant Tony Poole of the Intelligence Corps, who worked as a 'Field Intelligence NCO' at the RUC station at Dungannon, set up the plan in 1974 and explained it to Holroyd. Poole planned to use a Catholic youth, who had recently been questioned by the Army, as his infiltrator. The hope was that he might finish up at an IRA training camp in the Republic.

But Poole's choice of agent was ludicrous. The operation quickly went wrong and his operative, Columba McVeigh, a woolly-headed 17 year old, went to jail for four months. In February 1975, an innocent Protestant man, was killed almost certainly as a result of the bungled operation. Three Catholics are believed to have then been shot in turn in a 'tit for tat' revenge killing.

During the summer of 1974, Poole told Holroyd that McVeigh, was to be 'set up' on a charge of possessing ammunition. He would carefully be allowed to avoid arrest and would ask the IRA to get him out. Poole and his colleagues were particularly keen to compromise a priest, who was then working in a

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small village nearby, and whom they suspected was a key to the IRA escape route. McVeigh knew the priest concerned.

Poole's plan was to give the youth several rounds of ammunition in a cigarette packet, to put in a chest of drawers in his bedroom. Poole was then to order an army raid on his house, claiming 'a tipoff' from an informer. The Army would think the find was genuine. McVeigh's parents have confirmed that the operation began as Poole had planned it; an Army team suddenly raided their house at 6 am one morning in September 1974 — but Columba escaped. His father saw the Army searchers go straight to the bedroom drawer and announce as they opened the cigarette packet that 'we've found it'.

So McVeigh went on the run. But the suspected priest refused to help him; and another priest, unconnected with the IRA, sheltered him briefly. McVeigh then went to the police station to ask Sergeant Poole for further instructions, which surprised the police, as he was supposed to be on the wanted list. After a week spent openly in Dungannon, he was arrested by an Army patrol.

He was charged with illegal possession of ammunition and held in jail. In court, he refused to recognise the court — the normal stance of a member of the IRA. But the IRA knew that McVeigh had not joined. Inside Crumlin Road Jail, he was beaten up by Provisionals and accused of being a stool pigeon. He confessed his involvement and agreed to give the IRA complete details of his dealings with the security forces and a list of names of people working with them.

This information was sent out of Crumlin Road in a coded letter. The Army specialists decoded it and showed the list of names to Holroyd. The list the IRA had obtained from McVeigh was nonsense, fabricated in order to escape further beating. At the head of the list of Catholics supposed to be collaborating with the British was a well respected local solicitor and SDLP politician. At the top of the list of Protestants was the McVeigh family's milkman, a Protestant who lived in the same area as the family. We have also spoken to a public figure in Dungannon, who saw the list after it had been sent out. He confirmed that he saw the same names as Holroyd.

COLUMBA MCVEIGH was given a suspended sentence in January 1975 — completely unprecedented for someone accused of terrorist offences and who had implied membership of the IRA. He went to Dublin with his brother to live there, but suddenly disappeared ten months later. He has never been heard of since.

Father Denis Faul, a leading spokesman for Northern Ireland Catholics, who knows the McVeigh family, says that by letting Columba go free in this way, he was in effect being proclaimed an informer — even though he had been quite unable to supply any information at all. The suspended sentence, says Father Faul, 'condemned him to death'.

A month after McVeigh was freed, on 11 February 1975, the 'milkman' on his list was gunned down in a nearby village. The dead man was not in fact the regular milkman, but his relief roundsman. Christopher Mein, a recently married 29-year-old Protestant, had taken on the round on his own for the first time that day. He had no connection with any loyalist organisation. Holroyd noted the milkman's death in his notebook at the time, commenting that 'the milkman in Pomeroy was head of Tony's man's confession list . . . "mistaken identity"'.

As a result of this bungle, Sergeant Poole became *persona non grata* at Dungannon police station. So the Army created a new job for him in a town 30 miles away. When Holroyd revisited Northern Ireland in the summer of 1975, he says he was told that both Poole and another Army intelligence man were being posted home, because the RUC had begun investigating what had really happened to McVeigh. Sergeant Poole is still in the Army. But the Ministry of Defence have refused permission for journalists to talk to him about the case — which is, like the other Holroyd reports, under investigation by the police and DPP.

Political psychiatry

Captain Holroyd claims that he has been the victim of a campaign of vilification and what amounts to 'political psychiatry' by the Army. He has succeeded in getting the Army to withdraw allegations by a senior officer of 'mental stress', which were originally used to justify his removal from Northern Ireland. We have established that this original slur was based on false evidence used in Army records.

The mid-1970s, was a time, as both the Ministry of Defence and the police now openly acknowledge, of poor co-operation and co-ordination between competitive intelligence operations in Northern Ireland. With the Army in effect unaccountable to civil authority, it was also a time when the 'cowboys', keen to make a name for themselves, flourished.

Holroyd's loyalty to the police and their undercover agents made him an awkward customer for some Army commanders. Another source of friction was that he started working directly for the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), whose controller was based at Army headquarters, but whose activities were kept a closely-guarded secret from the Army staff. Holroyd worked with both SIS staff and with the undercover SAS team, thus giving him detailed knowledge of sensitive activities by the security forces.

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The last straw, so far as some in the Army were concerned, was a secret trip Holroyd made to Dublin in the spring of 1975. At the invitation of a senior Garda officer, Assistant Commissioner Garvey, Holroyd and some RUC officers went to the Garda headquarters at Phoenix Park, Dublin, to inspect materials seized from an IRA bomb factory. Army officers were officially supposed never to cross the border without permission. Holroyd's Army commander had told him not to go. But intelligence staff at the Northern Ireland Army HQ in Lisburn, says Holroyd, countermanded this order.

Holroyd was removed from his post, without warning, on 27 May 1975. The ostensible reason given to him was that his wife (from whom he is now divorced) had suddenly complained that he had repeatedly threatened her life and those of their children with a hdden gun. Following this, his wife's doctor was alleged to have told Army officers that, if the Army didn't commit Captain Holroyd to mental hospital, they would. Following these alleged complaints, Holroyd was persuaded to undergo a brief examination at Musgrave Park Hospital in Belfast. He was then ordered to report to an Army Hospital at Netley, Southampton.

Holroyd's account of these events is now confirmed by the Ministry of Defence. An MoD spokesman claimed to the *New Statesman* earlier this year that Holroyd's wife and her GP

> were discussing whether he should be certified or not . . . The Commanding Officer had no choice in view of what was recommended to him by the GP at the time . . .

But this version of events is completely denied by both the ex-Mrs Holroyd, and by her GP — and by Holroyd himself. Holroyd's ex-wife says that she merely told another Army wife that Holroyd was under too much strain in his job and had wanted her to return with their children to England for a month, to avoid further pressure on their marriage. She had not been threatened with a gun, but had merely told his Army colleagues that he kept his 'unattributable' gun (in fact, merely a spare barrel) in their house.

Released after a rest period at the Netley Hospital, Holroyd was told that he could not return to Northern Ireland. Instead, he was offered a job of equal status in England. He refused and appealed to the Army Board against the confidential order which had sanctioned his removal from Northern Ireland. He was told that the Board decided

> that his removal from appointment was justified in the circumstances at the time, but that this does not reflect adversely on his character or ability . . .

The Board directed that 'any reference to his mental condition shall be expunged'. The only justification for his removal that then remained was an allegation that he allegedly 'disobeyed orders' by going on the secret mission to Dublin — a serious disciplinary offence, if true, but one for which no charges or court martial were ever brought. □

NEXT WEEK: Kidnap plots, death threats and booby traps.

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POLITICS

Getting out of control — and winning hearts

Two successive election defeats for Labour and the decline in membership of all Left political parties offer unmistakable evidence of the unpopularity of current Left political practice. In the year of the centenary of the founding of the Fabian Society and the 150th anniversary of William Morris's birth, which strands of political thought should the Left be building on to come out of its isolation? In the first of an occasional series, Geoff Hodgson criticises the emphasis of the Left on State control at the expense of grassroots democracy

WHILE SAATCHI and Saatchi sell the Tories with promises of individual freedom, Mrs Thatcher increases police control at the expense of hard-won basic rights. And yet as she also limbers up to scrap local government powers, opinion polls show that it is the Labour Party which the public associates with centralised State control.

But if this sounds like Newspeak, it is not a recent media myth. In fact, the single outstanding problem in Labour's post-war political image is its commitment to State control.

Popular hostility to State power and centralised control can be seen in many opinion polls. In December 1983 voters in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, part of Labour's supposed heartland, were asked: 'Are you personally in favour of more State ownership of industry?' Only 29 per cent of all respondents answered 'Yes', and 60 per cent answered 'No'. This is a similar response to that in a earlier national survey by Ivor Crewe.

Even more disturbing for Labour is the answer to another question: 'In your view does the Labour Party want to set up in Britain an economic system that is similar to that in Russia or Eastern Europe?' A staggering 57 per cent of non-Labour voters, and 44 per cent of the entire sample, answered 'Yes'. Only 26 per cent of non-Labour voters said 'No'. In the popular image, socialist equals State control equals the Eastern Bloc.

Is this just a superficial 'image' problem, to be rectified with appropriate doses of Labour's equivalent to Saatchi and Saatchi? Or is it a potentially fatal flaw in Labour's version of socialism? 'Statism', meaning the belief that the State must be *the* agency for change and control, is rooted in many of Labour's traditional policies. It 'unites' the Party, from old-style Fabians to reconstructed Bolsheviks. It is rooted in its history, the circumstances of its formation, and the shifting experiences of the last half century. Compared with other, and more successful, socialist parties, Labour has been slow to modify and to embrace more attractive socialist visions and practices. Above all, it is not a view which allows 'ordinary people', all those voters, any role in changing, or controlling their lives.

More than its sister organisations abroad, the British Labour Party has been dominated historically by a peculiar combination of statist politics and traditional, defensive trade unionism. The trade unions delegated their 'political' functions to the Parliamentary Labour Party, which tacitly agreed not to interfere in most trade union affairs. Correspondingly, the trade union wing tacitly agreed not to interfere in parliamentary politics. For this and other reasons the Labour Party tended to ignore key issues such as the politics of the workplace.

At the same time the 'political' wing of the Labour Party developed a very State-centred view of socialist politics, partly as a result of the formative influence of the Fabians. They believed that major social problems could be solved by the attention of appointed experts acting at the government's behest. They strongly opposed any large-scale extension of democracy to the running of industry and most forms of political decentralisation.

The trauma of the Great Depression of the 1930s turned the eyes of most Labour Party members to the 'economic miracle' and 'rational planning' in the Soviet Union. This did not result from any large-scale conversion to Marxism, but from the belief that the USSR was the exemplar of planning, and the rational and scientific utilisation of human and material resources. While mass unemployment ravaged the West, the Soviet Union boasted of its full employment, its five-year plan and its rapid economic growth. Many British socialists felt that this planned economy, which appeared to assert human control over the vagaries of the market, outweighed any shortcomings in Stalin's political regime.

For the West, the USSR could also claim an exemplary moral purpose and political legitimacy. Beatrice Webb wrote in her diary in January 1932 that the Soviet Union provided for the Left in Britain its 'spiritual power'. In addition the USSR seemed to be the main international bulwark against the fascist advance in Europe. Thus, the Left as a whole was then seen as both the champion of democracy and the enemy of destitution, and thousands were recruited on this basis.

The Second World War brought extensive centralised planning to British society. Much of it was done, like rationing, on the basis of an appeal to egalitarianism or fairness. While the leaders of the 1945-51 Labour government took the side of the US in the emerging Cold War, the identification of 'socialism' with the centralised systems of the Eastern Bloc was indelible at the time. Socialism was seen as state paternalism and nationalised industry, even if the addition of parliamentary democracy was strongly advocated in the British case. With this important qualification, the USSR remained the utopia of the Left — at least, until 1956. As Ben Pimlott has argued:

> a lingering sympathy for the Soviet Union remained, placing the Left in an uneasy and unfashionable position when tension between the super-powers entered its most pathological phase.

Even the 'Third Alternative' policy of the *Keep Left* group, in the 1940s and 1950s, failed to relate the problem of an increasingly austere and unpopular picture of the Eastern Bloc to the statist economic policies of the Left at home. Its leaders, including Richard Crossman,

Jeff Willis

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Michael Foot and Ian Mikardo, argued for a

> genuine middle way between the extremes of American free enterprise economics and Russian totalitarian socio-political life.

Did this mean a combination of Stalinist-type economics with Western, parliamentary democracy? There is nothing to suggest otherwise. The Left failed to provide an alternative *economic* vision to that found in the East.

The 'revisionist' movement of the 1950s, led by Tony Crosland and Hugh Gaitskell, challenged the commitment to nationalisation, but not the centralist and paternalist image. The State was still to do things *for* the people, on their behalf.

The difference between Left and Right within the Party was largely over degrees of statism and different kinds of aims for State power. (The Left is more concerned to take power from the bosses, using State agencies, the Right to use the latter to distribute benefits to the poor.) The same one-dimensional view of socialism that had prevailed before the War was simply diluted rather than challenged. Crosland displaced the Stalinism of the Left with the paternalism of the local town hall and the welfare state. And this new version of statism was partially inscribed in the practice of the Labour governments of 1964-70 and 1974-79, and all except the most recent of local Labour councils.

THESE CRUCIAL weaknesses have to be overcome, both to provide the socialist movement with a sense of direction and to reverse the growing 'hegemony' of the New Right. Unlike the 1930s, the Left today is losing the battle of ideas. It would also be a serious mistake to suggest that New Right ideas are completely without substance, or that they stem simply from prejudice or class interest. There is much that is attractive to voters in the New Right's slogan of 'getting the State of people's backs'.

This alone should make the Labour Party hesitate before advancing its traditional solutions, based as they are on statism and centralisation, albeit of a different sort. There are additional arguments to consider. First, it is naive to assume that elected leaders will generally be able to perceive and act in the interests of the people, as many paternalists assume. Second, as Alec Nove has argued with great effect in his book *The Economics of Feasible Socialism*, it is simply impossible to centrally plan every part of a modern industrial economy. To some extent, we have to rely on the market: there is simply no other practical alternative.

Ah, say the traditional Labour Left, that only happens under capitalism. In the socialism of the future, the problems will be overcome with adequate doses of 'workers' democracy'. This vague and sloganistic response ignores the massive amount of information that has to be handled and processed, and the enormous number of decisions that have to be made. It is not convincing to suggest that a hierarchical system of popular councils can deal with all the issues and sort out all the problems involved. As Oscar Wilde once suggested, socialism may be impossible because it will take too many meetings.

Should the Left not also consider whether it actually might be politically dangerous to place all economic power in the hands of the State through large-scale nationalisation? For in no country in which over 50 per cent of the means of production has been nationalised has a pluralistic or parliamentary democracy survived. And after all, socialist theorists are keen to emphasise an intimate connection between economics and politics. Recent examples have also shown the close relationship between the concentration of economic power in the hands of the State, and the dangerous centralisation of politics.

The Labour Party should give much greater emphasis to other forms of common ownership which are conducive to local control, such as workers' co-operatives, and explicitly re-affirm its commitment to the survival of a small private sector. Pluralism in politics has to be complemented and reinforced by economic pluralism. At the same time the movement has to rediscover from its own past the hidden traditions of non-centralist socialism.

This is not to deny that there are very real problems associated with decentralisation and the necessary survival of the market in the socialist system of the future. Unwelcome inequalities of income can be generated through one workers' co-operative being able to make more money than the next. However, this does not mean that decentralisation necessarily militates against socialism. It is possible to conceive of a system of taxes and subsidies to redress the inequalities that are generated by the market.

It would be wrong to suggest that the Labour Party has to abandon all forms of central planning and State ownership, and hurriedly adopt a co-operative market economy along with the decentralisation of every political and economic institution. That would be naive. Nevertheless, much greater emphasis has to be given to this approach and to changing the popular view that socialists are committed to Soviet-style centralisation.

History forged organisational linkes between the co-operative and the Labour movements, but never made dynamic political connections. For instance, the Labour council in Liverpool recently ended funding for housing co-operatives, preferring to incorporate them into its standard council housing system. And Norman Watson, Senior Development Officer for the Co-operative Development Association in the Northern Region, recently commented: 'The attitude of most leading trade unionists to workers' co-operatives is suspicious, if not hostile.' Elsewhere, strong support for industrial democracy has been found in a sample of British shop stewards, 89 per cent of whom were 'basically' or 'strongly' in favour of industrial democracy.

It would be much more fruitful for Labour to highlight the socialist aim of a wide, participatory democracy, rather than statism. Not only is grassroots democracy a desirable end in itself, but it is the only way in which the public at large are likely to recognise a need for an extension in common ownership. After all, if socialism is not fundamentally, initially and finally about popular sovereignty and extended democracy, is it really worth having at all? □

Geoff Hodgson's latest book, The Democratic Economy, *was published by Penguin Books on 26 April. He is a member of the executive of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee.*

FALKLANDS

Thatcher's road to war

Paul Foot shows how the navy and the government have kept changing their *Belgrano* story

TWO YEARS after the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, *General Belgrano*, at the start of the Falklands War, how much nearer are we to the truth of what happened?

Quite a lot nearer. First, the main reason given at the time for the sinking has been proved false. The *Belgrano* was *not*, as Defence Minister John Nott told the Commons on 4 May 1982, 'closing in' on the Task Force. She was, as everyone now knows, going in the opposite direction and had been doing so for at least 12 hours before being sunk.

The position was, we are now told, that the cruiser was sunk because she was an enemy ship on the high seas at time of war.

Immediately this theory runs up against another substantial government error. The *Belgrano* was *not*, as a government White Paper blandly stated seven months after the event, 'detected' on the day she was sunk (2 May). She was, as Mrs Thatcher admits in a letter to Labour's defence spokesman Denzil Davies, 'detected' on 30 April, sighted early on 1 May, and followed by the submarine *Conqueror* for 30 hours before the order came to sink her.

If the *Belgrano was* a threat when she was sunk, she was plainly much more of a threat when first sighted. So why was she sunk as a threat when she was 30 hours less of a threat than when first sighted?

Mrs Thatcher insists, however, that the Peruvian 'peace plan', furiously discussed at the highest level for at least 20 hours before the sinking of the cruiser, had nothing to do with the sinking. Indeed, wrote Mrs Thatcher, neither she nor anyone else in London had any idea that there was a Peruvian peace plan before the sinking. The first news of it did not come to London from either Lima or Washington until after the sinking of the cruiser, some 24 hours after the plan was first discussed between the President of Peru and the American Secretary of State, Alexander Haig.

This amazing communications gap was put to Cecil Parkinson in the recent (16 April) *Panorama* programme on these events.

Mr Parkinson, who was a member of the Falklands war cabinet, got himself in rather a tangle. For one awful moment he seemed to be contradicting Mrs Thatcher and saying that the war cabinet *did* know of the Peruvian plan before the sinking. The transcript reads like this:

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Admiral Lewin with friend at the Falkland service in St Paul's after the event

> PARKINSON: We knew that all sorts of people were — people who wanted to see a solution, which we wanted to see, which the prime example is . . . was President Belaunde [of Peru] trying to take up where General Haig had left off, but we couldn't . . .
> FRED EMERY: You knew that on Sunday, May 2nd?
> PARKINSON: We knew that the continuing background . . . that was we wanted, we wanted, we wanted a diplomatic initiative to succeed. Now, so there was no question of us abandoning diplomatic initiatives, or saying well, that's the end of them, we'll sink the *Belgrano* and get on with the war. We said we must keep the military pressure up, and we must pursue negotiations and we were faced with the decision, here was a danger to our fleet and we had an opportunity to reduce that risk and we took it.

He recovered just in time from the admission that the war cabinet, which met *after* telling the chiefs of staff that they could sink the *Belgrano* outside the 'exclusion zone', had heard of the Peruvian initiative. Instead, he said, it only knew of 'continuing processes'.

But if Mrs Thatcher didn't know of the Peruvian plan, Francis Pym, Foreign Secretary, certainly did. He went to Washington on the evening of 1 May. On arrival (at about 7 pm) he gave a press conference, in which he was described as being 'in ebullient form'. There had, he reminded the correspondents, been a series of attacks that day on the Falklands by the Task Force. They were intended to 'concentrate the minds' of the Argentine government on a peaceful settlement. As an earnest of that, he promised that there would be no more military attacks *unless any enemy ships or aircraft penetrated the exclusion zone*. Angus Macpherson of the *Daily Mail* reported: 'It was clear that the British fleet would not fire first unless provoked by an Argentine attempt to breach the 200-mile zone' (*Daily Mail*, 2 May 1982).

Mr Pym then went to bed, apparently, without so much as a phone call to Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who had been conducting most of the peace initiatives between Britain and Argentina over the preceding weeks. (Haig thinks that he did speak to Pym on the phone that night, but Pym on *Panorama* thought not.)

HAIG WAS very busy. According to his own account, he was 'up all night'. He was talking to President Belaunde, who in turn had been talking to General Galtieri of the Argentine. The Peruvian President found the Argentines in a mood to settle. Their minds *had* been 'concentrated' on peace by the British attacks. They *had* underestimated British resolve and commitment; and were anxious not to be humiliated in a war. The peace proposals of Belaunde (immediate withdrawal of both sides, and a four-country group to administer the islands) seemed attractive to Galtieri. Haig and Belaunde were up most of the night in eager and enthusiastic discussions.

At 10 am on that Sunday, Pym met Haig. They talked all morning, had lunch at the British embassy and spoke again on the telephone later in the afternoon. What were they discussing? Haig and the Peruvians are quite clear that they were discussing the text of peace proposals which they had good reason to believe the Argentines would accept that afternoon.

There are several references to 'texts' and 'documents' in the versions of both Belaunde and Haig. At his specially called press conference in Lima at 4.45 pm on the afternoon of 2 May 1982, President Belaunde said: '*The document* is not a capitulation for either side. 'I think it has the merit of being a *testament of victory* . . . In a couple of hours, it may be possible to advance much of the conclusion of the final *text*'. (my italics)

President Belaunde went on to say that he hoped peace might be signed in Lima that very night. In answer to a journalist's question, he replied:

> In the course of the morning obviously work was done on this *document* (my italics), and although the Secretary of State did not tell me this, he dropped me two or three hints which perhaps might derive from his conversations with the British Minister . . .

This view was strongly supported by Haig on the *Panorama* programme.

> HAIG: We had progressed rather well on the telephone. We were down to *words, single words* and specifically in two *paragraphs* of the six points and of course these *words* were critical and it was critical to know whether or not they were acceptable to the British government. (my italics)
> FRED EMERY: Were they?
> HAIG: Well, basically, we arrived at some articulations that appeared that they might be.

Now compare these clear recollections of both the Peruvian President and the American Secretary of State with what Francis Pym remembers. He told *Panorama*:

> There was *no text* discussed between us on Sunday, *no actual words* . . . there was no *actual piece of paper* with a *text* being altered — there was *nothing like that*.
> If it had been like that, then of course it would have been different. I would have been in touch with London right away about the *words* and so on, but it wasn't like that. (my italics)

He confirms that neither he nor Sir Nicholas Henderson, the British Ambassador in Washington, sent a single simultaneous word to London about the all-night phone conversations between Haig and Belaunde, nor about the three hours talks before lunch, nor about the talks over the lunch. He insists, as Thatcher does, that no news of the Peruvian initiative was sent officially from Washington until well after the *Belgrano* was sunk.

But what if the news leaked out unofficially? On *Newsnight* a year ago, Peter Snow quoted a source 'close to Haig' as saying that Haig phoned Thatcher around lunchtime in Washington that day. The coded messages to the Argentine fleet to return from the battle zone had gone out (at the latest) in the very early hours of the morning, and were almost certainly in the hands of the British Chiefs of Staff as they surveyed the war scene that Sunday morning. The Prime Minister and her Chiefs of Staff must also have known (as Mr Parkinson has admitted) at least that some diplomatic initiatives had started in an attempt to haul the parties back from the brink of war. Indeed the official government line was that hostilities had been called off that Sunday so that the diplomatic talks could go on in a comparatively calm atmosphere.

Peace on the Peruvian terms would have solved the Falklands dispute without much bloodshed; but it would have been disastrous for the Tory government and especially for the naval chiefs who were looking forward to proving their threatened ships and equipment in a 'hot' war. Perhaps the permission to change the rules of engagement, without announcement, and to sink the *Belgrano*, won from the

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war cabinet in a hurried meeting over drinks just before lunch at Chequers that Sunday, provided the Chiefs of Staff with a useful card up their sleeve, if the Peruvian peace business got 'out of hand'.

IT DID get 'out of hand'. By early afternoon, the peace room in the President's Palace at Lima was being prepared for a provisional treaty-signing ceremony. Haig was most enthusiastic about the peace terms. Had they been presented to the British government and the British military with the full support of the United States, Peru, the Argentine and the United Nations, they would have been impossible to resist.

In this context, it is worth recalling the other great mystery of the *Belgrano* story. Mrs Thatcher and the war cabinet gave permission for the sinking shortly before 1.00 pm British time. The cruiser was not sunk until seven hours later. Why the delay? Admiral Lord Lewin, Chief of the Defence Staff at the time, told *The World This Weekend* on 30 January 1983: 'On this occasion, communications worked very quickly'.

It was early in the morning in the US (8 am) when the war cabinet agreed that the cruiser could be sunk outside the announced exclusion zone. In Washington, General Haig was recovering from his all-night talks. Francis Pym was probably still asleep, oblivious, apparently, that the talks had taken place. Certainly no one bothered to tell *him* of the *Belgrano* decision. In the seven hours that followed, negotiations about the peace took huge strides forward. It was clear at least to the Peruvians and to Haig that by noon in America (5 pm in London) a peace agreement was a strong possibility; and that the Argentine armed forces council would be deciding the matter in five hours' time. There seemed no way that anyone could stop the onward march to peace.

At one stage that day, the Prime Minister of Peru, Manuel Ulloa Elias, who took part in the telephone negotiations, begged Haig to persuade the British to hold off while the talks hung in the balance. 'You must at least make the British fully aware of the consequences that anything like the break of a sort of *de facto* armistice would have on the Argentine decision', he remembers saying to Haig; and Haig replying that he would 'do his best' (Ulloa's interview with Mike Reid, for *Daily Mirror*, 8 June 1983).

In her letter to Denzil Davies, Margaret Thatcher claims that the order to sink the cruiser went out 'immediately' after the Rules of Engagement were changed by the War Cabinet at 1 pm. This conflicts sharply with the diary from a member of the crew of the *Conqueror*, quoted on *Panorama*. This says that the order was received at 1400 hours, South America time (7 pm London time), six crucial hours after the Rules of Engagement had been changed, and less than three hours before the Argentine officers sat down to discuss the Peruvian peace plan. One hour later, the *Belgrano* was sinking, with more than 300 of her crew already dead. The news came to the Argentine meeting after it had been in progress for an hour. Talks about the peace treaty were at once suspended. The war was on. Although negotiations continued for several more days, there was no longer any hope of a settlement.

Two years' persistent questioning, led by the indefatigable MP for Linlithgow, Tam Dalyell, have blown all the planks of the government's story to pieces. The *Belgrano* was not steaming towards the British fleet, but away from it. It was not sunk on sight as a threat, but trailed for 30 hours. If it ever was part of a supposed 'pincer movement' on the British fleet (and the Argentine experts are divided on this), the pincer movement had been called off the previous day, some 16 hours before the sinking. The Burdwood bank, cited by so many admirals as a 'danger' to a submarine, was no such danger. A submarine of any type would have no difficulty in crossing it.

All the important details of the story are false. Why should anyone believe the substance? Why should we not believe that the only conceivable reason for sinking the *Belgrano* at that time and place was to put an end once for all to any chance of peace? □

Paul Foot writes a weekly column for the Daily Mirror.

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REUTERS

Question of trust

Charles Raw looks at the argument's about the news agency's future

AS THE *Observer*'s independent directors and Tiny Rowland, chief executive of its proprietor Lonrho, dig in for a long struggle — it is time to raise again another issue of editorial independence, that of the news agency Reuters.

The issue was first raised by Alexander Chancellor, then editor of the *Spectator* and a former Reuters journalist, last autumn after it had become known that the company was to seek a public flotation, now due later this month. Chancellor pointed out that the objectives of the Reuter Trust, which, among other things, state that the agency should never 'pass into the hands of any one interest group or faction', would be endangered by the flotation.

Since then much time and thought has gone into divising a capital structure for Reuters, which, it was hoped, would meet the critics (while Chancellor himself fell victim to the whims of the proprietorial system and was replaced as editor by the *Spectator*'s owner, oil millionaire Algy Cluff). It is ironic that the system devised should effectively place the onus for maintaining the objectives of the trust — which include that Reuters 'integrity, independence and freedom from bias shall at all times be fully preserved' — with the present owners, the majority of whom are this country's newspaper proprietors.

So those who will ultimately be responsible for the objectives will be precisely those who provide the greatest cause for fear that the newspapers they own will not be unbiased and independent. So much so that in the case of Murdoch and Times Newspapers and Rowland and the *Observer* independent directors were appointed with statutory powers to intervene. (The proposed flotation of Reuters will radically transform the balance sheets of both Times Newspapers and the *Observer*, giving huge unforeseen gains to both News International and Lonrho to set against the papers' losses — and giving them good reason to watch the future affairs of Reuters closely. Much the same applies to Fleet Holdings, although there Lord Matthews escaped the indignity of having to accept 'independent' directors because he had never been a newspaper proprietor before and had no record of interference. He has since made up for that.

It is curious that the Reuters management, who for the most part come from journalistic backgrounds, should have gone wholeheartedly along with this plan, for it gives the journalists no formal rights at all, apart from the say of those few who are directors. No doubt they believe that in the future, as in the past, there is little danger of the newspaper prop-

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rietors producing a concerted line, since they can rarely agree on anything anyway. Then there are the trustees whose role will ostensibly be strengthened by the appointment of new non-newspaper industry members and who will have a blocking 'founder share'. Finally, as long as Reuters is producing money hand over fist, there is no reason for the owners to do anything to endanger the life of the goose laying the golden eggs.

But these conditions may not always exist. In the first place, the very structure will force the newspaper proprietors to take a concerted position, since, I understand, the arrangements include a provision that they will have separate meetings before the Reuters general meetings to work out a common line, which they can then enforce with a block vote. Secondly, the trustees will still effectively be controlled by the proprietors. Finally, the present remarkable growth of Reuters cannot last for ever.

It is the long-term future that concerns the institutional investors, who have objected strongly as a matter of principle to the extra controlling voting power to be given to the newspaper proprietors. As Geoffrey Musson, chairman of the National Association of Pension Funds' protection committee, which is urging its members to boycott the issue of Reuters shares, has said: 'We have to think not only of the glowing circumstances of a company today but what happens in 10 to 15 years time'. They would, they believe, be left powerless under the present proposals with the newspaper proprietors controlling both trustee and shareholder votes. They are not, however, opposed to proposals to ensure that the objectives of the trust are maintained, but believe this could be done by the blocking power of the trustees' 'founder shares' — trustees they would probably rather see not dominated by the newspaper proprietors.

As the *New Statesman* pointed out last week, most newspaper proprietors today are in fact public companies, owned by their shareholders. What has happened is that those who run these companies have come to be treated as the personal owners and controllers of the newspapers. That state of affairs is to be formally perpetuated at Reuters. On these grounds, it seems to me, the institutional investors' objections are valid. The objectives of the Reuter Trust could be met, as they argue, without the effects they object to. Indeed, the very unwillingness of the Reuters proprietors at present to try to meet the investors' points, indicates how keen they must be on control.

Giving the investors equal votes would ensure the true independence of Reuters just as much as leaving control with the present band of proprietors. Of course, it does not follow that the shareholders would necessarily support the management or journalists in a future dispute. (There have been no cries from the shareholders of Lonrho at its interference at the *Observer*, but then the institutions have never much liked Lonrho as an investment: it is essentially a company of small shareholders whose loyalty to Rowland is unquestioning.) But it is worth remembering that institutional investors do not always act out of crude commercial interest: the Legal & General, after all, back the *Sunday Times*'s demands for better compensation from Distillers for the 'Thalidomide children'. □

SILKWOOD

Story behind the story

Caroline Grist tells the continuing nuclear saga

SILKWOOD the film, which opened last month with maximum newspaper coverage, owes its existence to film-makers Buzz Hirsch and Larry Cano; but Silkwood, the political case, owes most to two women activists, Kitty Tucker and Sara Nelson.

It was largely because of their lobbying efforts — Sara Nelson was a full-time worker for the National Organisation of Women (NOW) — that Karan Silkwood's death become an international issue.

A lab technician in the Kerr-McGee plutonium plant outside Oklahoma City, Karen gradually became aware that safety standards at the factory were being ignored. She began working with the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Association to inform the workforce of their frequent contamination. She too eventually found out that she was contaminated with plutonium — from the refrigerator in her own apartment. On the evening of 13 November 1974 she set out to meet a reporter from the *New York Times*, taking documents with her. She never made it. She was found dead in her wrecked car off Highway 74; the papers were never found.

After her death, Tucker and Nelson helped to organise her supporters, lobbying and raising money to pursue the case. But efforts to mount both a Senate hearing and then a Congressional hearing on the case were blocked. The first was halted by the enormously influential Dean McGee, head of the plutonium plant. The Congressional hearing collapsed when a sympathetic Congressman was removed from the chair of the relevant sub-committee.

But the US Freedom of Information Act means that it is possible to challenge in the courts matters which in Britain would be deemed prejudicial to national security. So the next step was to go to court on behalf of Karen's family, to try to prove that Kerr-McGee had in some way been negligent in their dealings with her. The case was fought by Danny Sheehan, a brilliant young civil rights lawyer with a reputation for winning and he beat Kerr-McGee. The jury in Oklahoma found the company liable for Silkwood's contamination and guilty of 'wilful, wanton, and reckless' negligence in the operation of its plant.

Rejecting Kerr-McGee's claim that Karen had recklessly irradiated herself to embarrass the corporation, the jury awarded $10 million in punitive damages and $505,000 in compensation to Karen's three young children. This is the first time a jury has awarded damages to a victim of radiation contamination from a nuclear facility. Kerr-McGee's appeal was first upheld in the Appeals Court, but then thrown out by the Supreme Court in January this year, despite support for the company from the Reagan administration. But the case still drags on, as Kerr-McGee contest the amount of damages.

Buzz Hirsch and Larry Cano's efforts to make a film about the Silkwood case also involved a spectacular courtroom drama. Before the original trial in 1979, the FBI subpoenaed Hirsch to hand over his taped interviews with Karen's workmates and friends. He refused. This meant he had to take on a huge legal battle as he tried to fight off a contempt of court indictment.

During this time a film deal he had with Warner Brothers fell through. As he says: 'Nobody wants to work with a producer who could be going to jail for contempt of court.' But ultimately Hirsch won the right not to hand over the tapes and the protection enjoyed by American print journalists to keep their sources confidential was extended to film makers. Hirsch faced a $100,000 legal bill, but Hollywood luminaries like Jane Fonda, Marlon Brando and Burt Lancaster raised the money.

Hirsch and Cano's problems were not quite over. Lawyers for their new company, ABC Motion Pictures, were very jittery. 'Every line in the film had to be substantiated in six different ways,' he said. 'We had to be absolutely certain that the portrayal was grounded in fact.'

Hirsch rejects criticisms by Karen Silkwood supporters that the film does not properly explore the safety violations at Kerr-McGee. He says: 'The purpose of the movie was not to do an exposure job on Kerr-McGee.' But he does admit that the ABC lawyers wrote the disclaimer that appears on the screen at the end of the film, saying that the police claimed the crash involved no other car and that an autopsy found traces of drugs in Karen's body. 'But I am not sorry about anything,' he said.

Meanwhile, they are still investigating what happened to the 40lbs of plutonium which Karen discovered had 'gone missing' from the plant. During the trial a Kerr-McGee man said in court that before the plant was shut down in 1975 this was the exact amount of plutonium still unaccounted for'. Nelson said: 'There is evidence that the material was sold on the black market to South Africa, Israel and Iran under the Shah. In our opinion, she had that kind of evidence — that's why she was killed.' □

The Karen Silkwood Fund operates from 1324 North Capitol Street NW, Washington DC 20002, USA.

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DIARY

We continue our exclusive revelations from 'The Secret Diary of Margaret Hilda Roberts, aged 14¼', as edited by Sue Townsend

THURSDAY: We are under siege! Nobody can get in or out of the shop. What started as a trivial incident — Mrs Arkwright objecting to a 100 per cent rise in the price of brown bootlaces — has blown up into a major confrontation. Even as I write, braziers are being lit and the Arkwright children (Communists all) are scrawling Marxist messages on pieces of cardboard and holding them aloft.

Constable Perkins is flailing wildly about with his truncheon, but to little effect. I fear that reinforcements may be needed. Ronald Wrinkle telephoned and offered to send his CIA (I think it stands for Christians in Action) boys round, but Father said: 'As a Christian, I cannot condone violent action'. Wrinkle replied: 'Goddamit, Roberts, I ain't suggestin' open violence, just a little itsy-bitsy poisoning of the Arkwright water supply, or a mite of gentle telephone tapping'. Father bent his grizzled head as he pondered on the morality of such covert action. I urged him to accept Wrinkle's offer, but Father said firmly: 'This is England, Mr Wrinkle. Such activities are anathema to me. Margaret may live to see the day when they take place, but I hope I never will'. There was a sound of a boot smashing into bakelite, then the line was disconnected.

FRIDAY: An uneasy night with little sleep due to the singing and chanting of the mob. At 3 am a song was sung at first weakly by Arnold Arkwright, but soon to be taken up by the mob:

Working men and women
Don't go to Roberts' shop
He's charging four and nine pence
For a two and tuppenny mop.
He's upped the price of sugar,
He's a grasping, greedy bugger
But he's done it for the very last time!
Chorus: We ain't payin' ninepence for a bootlace,
or 1/6 for a pear.
It's us workin' folk who buy 'em,
While the gentry do decry 'em
An' it ain't just bleedin' fair.

Mother said: 'Oh, it's sung to the tune of *John Brown's Body*.' Then, to my horror, she started to sing along, until stopped by a harsh word from Father.

SATURDAY: Police reinforcements have arrived. They looked most impressive as they cycled up the High Street. But, unfortunately, they were vastly outnumbered. The protestors have had their ranks swollen by wretched railwaymen and other brown boot wearers. Father is in despair. Nobody has spent a penny in the shop since Wednesday night. The only person to prosper has been Arthur Slagheap, the fish and chip shop owner. He has been burning the midnight oil, selling his greasy wares to the dissidents.

SUNDAY: Mr MacGregor, the brown bootlace manufacturer, telephoned Father and congratulated him on his stand. He said 'Who needs working men any more, Alf? I'm diverting my manufacturing process and going into nooses. There's going to be a big demand in the future'. Father was heartened by this news. He's big on capital punishment. As we were unable to leave the shop to go to church, Father said a few sanctimonious words over the bacon counter.

MONDAY: Cecil must be getting desperate for his Brylcreem by now. I've seen his unkempt head at the back of the mob. I signalled madly but he was deep in conversation with Edwina Slurry.

TUESDAY: I've had suspicions about Mother's political affiliations for some time, so I took it upon myself to read her diary. I closed the pages half an hour later, my cheeks a'crimson. Here are a couple of this week's entries.

> **Thursday:** Al Boley is scrumptious. His voice sends me legs to jelly and he send Chivers down me back.
> **Friday:** I say good luck to the brown bootlace boys. Alf is wrong to charge such a price, when he knows the laces is inferior and break at the first pull.

So! We have a traitor in our midst. I informed Father immediately. Mother has been locked in the meatstore.

WEDNESDAY: After a night of violence — torchlight processions, effigies burnt of me and Father — the siege was ended when a contingent of police horses from Norwich arrived with backup from Ronald Wrinkle's pink Cadillac. The Arkwright hovel has been turned into a field hospital for the injured, but I fear the uprising is not yet over. For today emergency supplies of brown bootlaces arrived from South Wales and Yorkshire and were given away free with a bag of chips by Arthur Slagheap. A few of our loyal customers turned up. Nigel Lawless bought a pound of chocolate cherries, bless him, but I fear that Grantham will never be the same again.

ROGER WODDIS

The President's things

Asked why he kept on talking about democracy after having his speeches condemning the Soviet Union and praising capitalism censored by his Chinese hosts, President Reagan replied: 'Well, that's my thing'.

Ralph Waldo Emerson,
The poet, once opined:
'Things are in the saddle,
And gosh, they ride mankind.'
I guess it takes a poet
To read a cowboy's mind.

My things are wide and varied,
My simple faith extends
From yelling at the Russians
To worrying my friends,
From good old Armageddon
To where the rainbow ends.

Another thing is swimming —
Say, did you see my crawl? —
And showing them who's sheriff,
And always riding tall.
(My Chinese pals responded
By climbing up the Wall.)

Although, to cut the bullshit,
I don't know Marx from Ming,
I didn't duck the challenge
Of chopsticks in Peking,
And I'll be re-elected
If God says, 'That's your thing.'

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John Minnion

E. P. THOMPSON REPLIES TO SABATA

Last year Dr Jaroslav Sabata wrote an open letter to E. P. Thompson. It followed exchanges published in the* New Statesman *in 1981 and 1983 between Thompson and a Czech 'dissident', using the pseudonym Vaclav Racek.*
Sabata, a philosopher and psychologist, was a member of the Czech Communist Party Presidium during the Prague Spring of 1968. Expelled from the CP in 1971, he served five years for 'subversion of the Republic' (he distributed leaflets in the 1971 elections advising people of their right not to vote). An original signatory of Charter 77, Sabata was arrested at the end of 1978 and served a further 27 months in jail for communicating with Polish KOR activists. He now lives in poor health at Brno.

*The text of Sabata's open letter is published in *Voices from Prague* (Palach Press/END), available from END, Southbank House, Black Prince Road, London SE1; and Palach Press, PO Box 222, London WC2H 9RP; price £1.50.

Dear Dr Sabata, May 1984

I have delayed a reply to your open letter for two reasons.

The first is that your important and encouraging letter allowed for no response except the single word, *Yes*. But you would scarcely have thanked me if that had been all that I had sent back to you at Brno.

You argue (as many of us in the West have also argued) that 'what we really need is a joint strategy for transforming Europe into a single entity'. But this can only come about from 'a democratic transformation', which will entail a process more radical than that which is usually implied by 'detente' or 'convergence'.

The change which you wish us to work for together would involve 'a convergence of a quite different type': a coming together in a convergent strategy of social and political movements, traditional and less traditional, from both halves of our divided continent. Its long-term political strategy 'is the demand to *abolish* the undemocratic legacy of the postwar social and political settlement, *end* the division of Europe into two opposing systems and *unify* this artificially divided continent' — in short, 'a democratic peace'.

As I have said, I can only reply 'yes' to this. Yet there was a second reason why I have delayed my reply. Ever since I received your letter a slow and predictable nightmare has been unrolling before our eyes. I read you letter first last June, just as an election returned to power in my country a government truculently committed to deploying cruise missiles here — and to libelling the British peace movement as a witting or unwitting agency of Soviet interests.

From June until December the nightmare unrolled. Everything that we had warned against for more than three years came to pass according to our worst predictions. The superpowers and their client states performed to perfection their ascribed Cold War roles. The demonstrations of millions in West Europe and North America were powerless to affect the outcome. And, as we had also predicted, the Soviet military responded to this in the same vocabulary of confrontation and 'balance', and instantly set in motion the deployment of new missiles not only on Soviet territory but also — as if mimicking NATO — on the territory of certain of its client states in the Warsaw bloc.

The blocs have closed against each other. And this has closed also the narrow political aperture through which your perspective of 'a democratic peace' could be glimpsed. The beneficiaries of this closure are the security services and the obsessional ideologists of both sides.

Of course the strengthening of the security state does not take place on each side in exactly the same way. In the 'Free West' the erosion of our liberties does not occur with one single all-embracing decree from an all-wise Party Presidium, but in little lapping waves like a rising tide: trials and threats under the Official Secrets Acts, the deprivation of trade union rights of employees in sensitive areas, increasing pressures upon our civil servants and our media of communication.

You will perhaps find such examples to be trivial. It would not be discreet to invite you to exchange examples of similar precautions taken in your own country. Yet I draw attention to these matters to illustrate another aspect of

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'convergence'. If, as you have written, the postwar history of our continent is the history of its militarisation, then the rival antagonists, like wrestlers locked in each others' nuclear arms, have been growing more alike.

Even the vocabulary of the antagonists has a weary similitude. For four years our NATO apologists have assured us that cruise and Pershing missiles are enforced and necessary measures of 'defence' against the expansionist aspirations of the Soviet Union. And now I notice that your own *Prace* (14 December 1983) has called on its readers to support 'the enforced and necessary measures of the CPCZ Central Committee Presidium and CSSR Government against the hegemonist aspirations and intimidation which the Reagan government and its armour-bearers in the offensive military NATO pact have called into being'.

The responsibility for this latest upthrust in the arms race lies heavily (although not exclusively) with the NATO powers. And NATO's apologists have, as always, sought to justify their measures in the language of 'human rights'. And, as usually happens, the consequence of the closure of the blocs against each other is that further restrictions are imposed upon the civil rights of citizens on both sides.

My response to you must therefore be somewhat tinged with pessimism. You write that we now have the task of formulating 'a common, universal, and all-embracing strategy for the democratic transformation of Europe'. I agree. But, with the new missiles now in place (and many many more coming on after these) where does our strategy start?

PERHAPS WE MIGHT now suspend the argument about the missiles and seek to go *behind* the missiles and find out what is moving them there? What is the Cold War now about? From what structures and from what ideologies do these growing armouries arise?

For even missiles have to be considered also in the light of political symbols. They are, of course, symbols of 'face' and of 'posture' in the superpower confrontation. But they have increasingly become symbols of internal political confrontations also, within both blocs and within nations.

At a certain stage it became necessary for cruise and Pershing to be imposed upon a reluctant West European public, not because of any evident 'Soviet threat', but in order to symbolise the 'unity of NATO' and the hegemony of United States military power over its European allies. And it became essential for ruling groups in these countries (above all in Britain and West Germany) to impose these missiles in order to inflict a public defeat upon their own domestic opposition: that is, the peace movement.

The Soviet counter-deployments now going ahead employ the same vocabulary of symbolism. Their missiles also are symbols of 'posture' towards NATO. And they are also symbols of the 'unity of the Warsaw powers', and loyal demonstrations and petitions in their support are intended to drown any questioning voices. So that in this symbolic sense the SS-21s, 22s or 23s are aimed in the first place not against NATO but against any strivings towards greater national autonomy by any East European nation. In this sense the missiles of both sides are like props which lean against each other, enforcing the increasingly irrational division of our continent, lest (if the props were removed) we might fall into each other's arms.

The Cold War today is a habit passed down from the past; and it is a habit to which the governing elites, on both sides, have become addicted, since they sense that its continuance is necessary to justify and sustain their own purchase upon power. Lip service is paid, and on both sides, to the desirable objective of the dismantling by mutual consent of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. But if any actual step in this direction is detected, on either side, it is instantly denounced as 'destabilising', and as a blasphemy against that Great Sacred Cow which both East and West must bow down before and worship: the 'Balance'. It is before the Sacred Balance that we sacrifice our little liberties and burn, for the delight of her nostrils, an ever-growing tribute of our taxes.

This Sacred Cow was the first-born calf of another great Cow who was sometimes worshipped by the name of 'Yalta'. The name was never accurate, but we know very well what 'Yalta' is taken to mean today: it describes the postwar settlement which passed down the division of Europe as we find it at this day — a division not only geographic, but also political and ideological. In short, 'Yalta' is reverenced or execrated as the Mama of 'Balance'.

The assent of the Soviet Union to the Helsinki agreement was purchased by the assent of the NATO powers to the finality of the settlement of the 'Yalta' frontiers. This concession was earnestly desired by ruling groups in the Warsaw bloc, who had been tormented for years by the rhetoric of John Foster Dulles and others, as to the 'roll-back' of Soviet power. And it was equally desired by certain of these rulers because they were aware that their own tenure upon power was uncertain.

From this a stereotype has grown up — that 'Yalta' is a settlement greatly desired by the rulers of the Warsaw bloc, but only grudgingly acceded to by the rulers of NATO for reasons of opportunism or in the interests of détente. And ideologists on your side of the world have done a great deal to give this stereotype credibility. The mere mention of the word is taken as a 'provocation'. And they insist, as a precondition of any discussion, that the inviolability of a particular historical adjustment of spheres of influence must also be extended to a pledge of the inviolability in perpetuity of the particular political systems now in being — but only in their half of Europe.

Anything less than this is, as you say, suspected as a 'call to arms'. In Western Europe far-reaching political changes are to be expected, and we have witnessed such changes, accomplished with maturity and with the minimum of bloodshed, in Portugal, Spain and Greece. But any change of a political order in your half of Europe — for example a change which offered to enlarge the potential of a democratic socialist society, as the Prague Spring promised to do — is ruled out of order as an outrage against Her Sacred Presence, the Balance.

However, I think that this stereotype is misleading. The true historical meaning of 'Yalta' is far more double-sided than it suggests. And, if one digs a little beneath the rhetoric of the ideologists of NATO, one discovers that they are no less fiercely committed to both 'Yalta' and the 'Balance' than are their Warsaw Pact analogues.

FOR THE 'YALTA' settlement, in its fullest historical meaning, did not only license the Soviet military presence in East and Central Europe. It also licensed a very powerful hegemonic United States presence in Western Europe.

The Soviet and American presences in Europe have of course been of a different order. If we leave aside the case of Greece (1945-50), the United States presence has not imposed regimes of its choice by military force. But while operating in a different mode and under different constraints, it has been an immensely powerful and distorting presence nonetheless.

It has by no means been a presence conducive to the advancement of human rights. It coexisted happily with totalitarian regimes in Portugal and Spain and with military regimes in Greece and Turkey. It is true that there were no American tanks in Madrid or Athens to prevent their peoples from liberating themselves from tyranny. We acknowledge this with relief, while at the same time noting that the same restraint has by no means been evident upon United States support for tyrannies in Latin America and Asia.

The United States military presence on our continent remains immensely strong, nearly 40 years after the end of World War II. What is it doing here? How long does it have licence to remain? There are United States military, air and naval bases in Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Iceland and scores of bases and installations in West Germany and Britain. American warships (some armed with nuclear weapons) patrol the North Atlantic and Mediterranean waters. An American fleet sailed up and down the coast of the Lebanon, firing heavy salvos into the interior of that unhappy country. Cruise and Pershing missiles on our territory are owned and operated by United States personnel.

This is the other side of the 'Yalta' settlement. And it is jealously defended by the ideologues of NATO. One strategy which West European peace movements have been seeking to advance is that of staged disengagement on our continent, by means of nuclear-weapons-free zones: in the Baltic, the Balkans, or a zone or corridor in Central Europe.

What is remarkable is the hostility which has been evinced, from start to finish, to all such proposals by the leaders of the NATO powers. I suggest that this is because they are seen as a threat to the other side of 'Yalta': that is, to the iron premise that every part of Europe that is not to the East of the Yalta division must be drawn by all possible means within the military and diplomatic structures of United States hegemony.

This premise is also inviolable. Thus when the Swedish proposals for a nuclear-free corridor in Central Europe were introduced to the Stockholm Conference, Mr Alois Mertes, the West German Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, commented that such a corridor 'is not compatible with the indivisibility of the territory of the European-American alliance'. And a fellow West German official chided Sweden for failing to 'honour the vital security

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interests of the member states of the Atlantic alliance' (*New York Times*, 21 January 1984).

The proposals for nuclear-free zones (which should entail reciprocal concessions from each bloc) can take their place in a European healing process, and I commend them to you as a part of our common strategy. Yet, as you well know, something must be added to them, and this could be added now, in advance of any agreement between states. The healing of Europe does not have to wait for signatures inscribed in the Kremlin and the White House. As you have written, 'détente will not lead to the dissolution of the military-political blocs unless a political discourse is established, one that will "grow" into a new political bloc'. In short, the traffic of ideas and of persons can precede any treaty whatsoever, and the establishment of trust may be the necessary precondition for any treaty.

This is not to call for the 'revision' of the 'frontiers of Yalta'. It is a call to throw these frontiers open, and (wherever this is possible) to commence to act as if these arbitrary frontiers did not exist. What is preventing this? It is, first, that the rulers on both sides are the last people who are able to advance this healing process, since their very function is ascribed to them by the rituals of the Cold War. And it is, second, the fear of unregulated social or intellectual change, and of possible 'destabilisation', which inhabits these rulers' breasts.

If NATO carries the major blame for the upwards armaments auction, then we must award the prize to the rulers of the Warsaw Pact for their activity in the repression of trans-continental dialogue. I think that they do desire to achieve some nuclear disarmament, but at the same time they wish every instrument of ideological armament to remain in place. They might endorse a nuclear-free corridor in Central Europe, but they would hope that the corridor would be wide enough to prevent the two-way flow of ideas from running across it. They do not wish the causes of peace and of liberty to recognise each other and to search for a common convergence.

YET EVEN NOW, as this recognition is taking place, our 'common strategy' remains indistinct. For 'Yalta' has two sides, and one side will not be unravelled unless we also unravel the other. If that Sacred Cow, the Balance, is preposterous in its military form, yet I fear that we must pay some deference to her in our political strategy. For whenever initiatives arise on either side, the rulers of the opposing bloc will try to turn these to their own advantage. So that, if we are to find a reciprocal common strategy, we must learn not only how to support the initiatives of each other but also how to refuse advantage to either bloc, even if this entails exercises of patience and self-restraint.

It was the failure to find this common strategy which contributed to the defeat (however temporary) of the two most powerful popular impulses on our continent in the past three years: those of Polish *Solidarnosc* and of the Western peace movement's resistance to NATO modernisation. These are both complex questions, which I must now leave aside. But in my view both cases, when strictly examined, illustrate that a common strategy which seeks to heal the tissues of Europe cannot succeed unless it presses against the structures and ideologies of both blocs.

It is necessary that I should make this explicit. For Mr George Shultz, the American Secretary of State, in his opening speech at the Stockholm Conference, has made his own intervention in our discussion. 'Let me be very clear', he said. 'The United States does not recognize the legitimacy of the artificially-imposed division of Europe. This division is the essence of Europe's security and human rights problem and we all know it'. And he went on, in language which seemed to echo our own, to talk of 'an artificial barrier' which has 'cruelly divided this great continent — and indeed heartlessly divided one of its great nations'.

This was a mischievous speech. Coming only one month after the deployment of cruise and Pershing missiles, which have divided Europe even more cruelly and Germany more heartlessly, it was a speech of consummate hypocrisy, whose aim was to perpetuate the division of Europe. For, of course, the United States has little intention of doing anything more than meddling, or 'stirring the pot', in Eastern Europe. And even this is subordinate to the more important aim, foremost in the minds of President Reagan and Mr Shultz, which is stirring the pot of the United States elections.

The immediate effect of Mr Shultz's speech has been to make more difficult the pursuit of our common strategy. The speech might have been calculated to meddle in the affairs of advocates of 'human rights' in the East, by pointing them out to the attention of the security services as possible friends of Western forces which may still cherish an appetite to 'roll back Yalta'. At the same time the speech was received by many in the Western peace movement with dismay. They have been searching for a strategy to break down the blocs. Now they fear that this could play into the hands of NATO's propagandists.

Mr Shultz is trying to prize apart the forces making for 'a democratic peace'. These forces have no part to play in the prescribed rituals of the Cold War. But this reminds me that while the United States is a great and — for some aspects of its history — an honoured neighbour of Europe, it is not a European nation. And the people of Europe might find their way better towards a healing process without Mr Shultz's intervention. For the United States's presence in West Europe is one half of the European problem.

IT IS NOW time that World War II was brought to an end. Thirty-nine years of abnormal conditions and of the presence of foreign troops upon our territories is long enough. Let the goal of our common strategy be the withdrawal of all United States and Soviet forces and bases back within their own national frontiers.

This is the only realistic way in which 'Yalta' can be superseded: not by its one-sided 'revision' (which will not happen), but by removing military pressures on both sides at the same time as the dividing frontiers are thrown more open. This will not come about at once, all in a lump. There will be phases, as new spaces, corridors or zones open up between the blocs; as individual nations, East or West, loosen their bloc-bondage and attain more autonomy; as the direct political discourse for which you call begins to establish confidence. There will be, at some point along the way, a place for Summit meetings and for conferences of European nations with a more serious agenda than the present Stockholm farce.

It will be an excessively difficult process. It is quite possible that Europe will blow up before we can succeed. At every stage one or the other bloc will try to turn events to its own advantage. If the United States should commence to withdraw its forces (as Mr Kissinger is now recommending), this might trigger off a compensating resurgence in West European militarism. If any East European nation sought to move into too close an association with the West, it might bring down upon itself a re-enactment of the events of 1968 which you will only too well remember. To achieve our common objective will require an unprecedented maturity in those popular movements, West and East, which seek to pace and to monitor the transition, and to limit the episodes of 'destabilisation'.

Yet this is not just one possible way forward. It is, I am convinced, the *only* way. The alternative is the convergence on collision course of two vast over-armoured security states towards the probable terminus of nuclear war. We do not have an alternative. Either our civilisation will perish, or we must make the entire political world over anew. And our rulers will never do that for us.

If we can work together, if we can support each other, we have an outside chance of success. I do not know what we would then discover, on the other side of 'Yalta'. I do not think it would be some new Eurobloc. Distinct differences in socio-economic and political systems will remain. I would look forward to European diversity (and Russia is a part of Europe) not to bureaucratic 'unity': and to the deconstruction, on both sides, of certain forms of state power.

I agree with you on two essential matters. First, this new Europe of our imaginations could not possibly exist without a radical transformation in its relations with the Third World, which would in turn (as you have argued) assist in the transformation of that world itself. And, second, such a resolution would be profoundly in the interests of the people of the United States and the Soviet Union as well. It would relieve both nations from vast expenditures and occasions for confrontation. It would strengthen those forces contesting the militarisation of their own societies. And, rather than expelling their citizens from our continent, it would welcome them back as respected neighbours to our common discourse.

Jaroslav Sabata, I thank you again for writing. I fear that the events of the past two years have left me pessimistic. It is possible that Europe is already within the valley of the shadow of death. But this very crisis of the twin militarisms is arousing on every side forces of resistance, which might lead on towards the 'convergence of a quite different type' for which you call. And if the Western peace movement is dismayed, I can assure you that it is very far from being defeated. Such voices as your own give us new heart to continue in our common pursuit for a democratic peace.

Yours sincerely,
Edward Thompson

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SUDAN

Nimiery's Deep South

The imposition of strict Islamic law has provoked Sudan's southern population into renewed revolt. Now a state of emergency has been declared to quash the rebels. Suzanne Cronje reports

THE DECLARATION of a state of emergency in Sudan last weekend must seem fortuitous to Washington, to say the least. President Nimiery's government has been as harsh a critic of Libya as the Reagan Administration itself. The references to external as well as internal enemies, with which Nimiery tried to justify his imposition of martial law, provide an ideal vehicle to keep the anti-Gadafy campaign going.

In March the UK sent AWAC surveillance planes and extra arms to Nimiery's aid: Omdurman radio station had been bombed, allegedly by a Libyan plane. There is no conclusive evidence that Libya was involved, but the claim suited American strategy and satisfied Nimiery's periodic insistence that his troubles are the result of external plots. The last of these was supposed to have been planned for 31 March, postponed apparently from its original 12 March deadline. He said at the time that more would soon be revealed. The state of emergency, which gives the army wide-ranging powers over normal restraints, was presumably designed to deal with these conspiracies — and to elicit further aid from Sudan's allies.

Nimiery admitted that there was political discontent. In fact, the country's political malaise is deep: the statement hinted at labour unrest as well as other forms of dissent. Khartoum University was closed indefinitely earlier this year to stop political debate. In particular, there had been questions about the imposition of a strict Islamic code of law in September last year.

Criticism came not only from the non-Moslem south, but from such influential quarters as the leader of the Ansar Sect, Sadiq al-Mahdi, a former prime minister, who had argued against the introduction of a code emphasising the punitive aspects of the orthodox Moslem Sharia laws. He was promptly arrested, and is still in prison. Even the Moslem Brotherhood, which has important Saudi backing, seems to have been taken by surprise at the suddeness of the religious reform. In North Africa such strict Islam is no longer accepted.

In his statement announcing martial law, Nimiery made it clear that last year's imposition of the Islamic code on the whole of the country would stand, despite the opposition of the non-Moslem South. This reinforces one of the main rationales of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) — a southern Sudanese organisation. Enforcing the whole of the population to live strictly by the Koran has been resented throughout southern Sudan and, together with the division of the South into three provinces, it led to renewed armed rebellion.

These changes were introduced without proper consultation and are therefore in breach of the 1972 Addis Ababa agreement which ended 17 years of civil war between the mainly Christian South and the Arabised North. The terms of this pact promised the South a large degree of autonomy and a fair share of development funds. In return, the break-away Anyanya guerrillas agreed to lay down their arms and become part of the Sudanese establishment. Southerners often stress that they had not lost the war, but had come to recognise that their separatist aim was antagonising the whole of Africa.

The unalterable nature of national boundaries is one of the few principles on which all member states of the Organisation of African Unity agree, and the SPLA, while comprising the former Anyanyas, no longer aims for secession. This makes it a more legitimate organisation in the eyes of OAU member states. But the SPLA's faith in Sudanese unity is not mere expediency. Although its leader, Colonel John Garang, was involved in the civil war, he has openly stated that his aim is to oust the Nimiery regime in Khartoum and to unite Moslems and Christians in a secular state. This is what makes the SPLA so dangerous to Khartoum.

Nimiery accuses Libya and Ethiopia of supporting the SPLA, and Gadafy may indeed have aided the rebels. His support for the liberation of Sudan 'inch by inch' from the pro-American Nimiery administration was publicly spelled out a few weeks ago. However, the SPLA consists largely of Sudanese soldiers who have deserted with their weapons, and external support may not be extensive. The SPLA professes to 'African socialism', and its political chief, Joseph Oduho — once a member of the Nimiery government — denied during a recent visit to London that Garang was a Marxist-Leninist: the authorities in Khartoum, he said, had forged documents to show that Garang was a communist, whereas he was trained at West Point in the US and known as a nationalist.

On the SPLA campaign and Sudanese unity, he argued that there was no reason why a southerner could not lead the country from Khartoum. While such a proposition would be laughed out of court in Khartoum itself, Nimiery knows that the SPLA is more than a local threat. The security chief, General Omar Mohammed Tayeb, recently said that the SPLA was starting to collaborate with the outlawed northern Communist Party, as well as with some trade unionists. It was difficult enough before 1979 to block the demands of the Anyanya secessionists, which were politically unsophisticated. With the new political direction of the SPLA, the Anyanyas are much more difficult to resist, particularly now that they are in alliance with Northern dissidents.

SO FAR the SPLA has succeeded in cutting rail traffic between Khartoum and Juba, the South's main town. It has also attacked multi-national interests which disregard southern 'rights' — hence the kidnapping of personnel working on the Jonglei Canal, which would rob the South of an important stretch of Nile water, and of staff of Chevron Oil, which is accused of preparing to export 'southern' oil for the benefit of the treasury in Khartoum. The SPLA also believes that Chevron aircraft have helped Nimiery by tracking its movements.

The Jonglei Canal project is a serious threat to the local population groups, which have already clashed as a result of the project because it has driven them to compete among themselves for access to water for their cattle. It also worries ecologists because of the drastic impact it will have on the landscape. The fact that the water will be exported to Egypt has caused particular resentment in the South.

An agreement between Sudan and Egypt signed in 1976 encourages Nimiery to rely on Egypt to bail him out of his security troubles, but only in case of external aggression. While Egypt has supported Khartoum over the Omdurman bombing, it has acted less enthusiastically than in the past. Despite American pressure, Egypt's President Mubarak is reluctant to allow himself to be sucked into Nimiery's southern troubles, which Cairo regards as being largely self-inflicted. Apart from anything else, a guerrilla war in the marshy Upper Nile country would be expensive and difficult to win.

Sudan is already forced to renegotiate foreign debts totalling a staggering $7 billion, and the introduction of Islamic law has helped to frighten away Western investors. The state of emergency will reinforce this economic disincentive. Nimiery is relying on US economic and military assistance and has undertaken to clean up the malpractices of Sudan's financial institutions. The promise of an anti-corruption drive is used to justify the powers he has now assumed. How Washington will react remains to be seen; even Nimiery's troops are not enthusiastic about fighting the SPLA and seem only prepared to defend the North. Washington cannot save Sudan's political establishment, but Africa is afraid that President Reagan might be tempted to try. □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□ Buying his meal in the police canteen at Heavitree (Exeter) a PC was tempted, and fell for, an eye-catching concoction — two pineapple rings and cream — attractively laid out on a nice blue china plate. An anguished cry came from behind the counter: 'Don't eat that, it's an officer's sweet!' and a member of the staff bore down, swept away his 'afters' and dashed through the door of the Officers Mess. He was then served with an 'other ranks' dessert. *One* pineapple ring, with cream, served on the obligatory chipped plate. — *Police* (Chris Marlow)

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HONG KONG

Colonial cold feet

Kevin Toolis reports that the rich want to get out

Hong Kong

ONE AFTER another, Hong Kong's Chinese investors are opting to take their money and run from the capitalist showcase island, whose future is still in doubt. Meanwhile, neither the assurances from the Communists in Beijing, nor those of the Tories in London, have succeeded in breaking the fall of the Hong Kong dollar.

Ever since Mrs Thatcher's disastrous defence of Hong Kong's colonial status in Beijing in September 1982, which incensed the Beijing leadership, near panic has swept the Hong Kong stock exchange and led to an unparalleled fall in the Hong Kong currency. The intense secretiveness of the talks, at Mrs Thatcher's insistence, further fuelled suspicion of a British 'sell-out' and shattered business confidence in the free-enterprise enclave. The veil of secrecy has only partially been lifted with Sir Geoffrey Howe's recent assurance of an internationally binding agreement. But the central issue in Cantonese eyes — the extent of autonomy when Beijing takes control in 1992 — remains to be resolved.

Beijing's plans, formulated as part of the pragmatic leadership of Deng Ziaoping, envisage the establishment of a special administrative region in Xianggang (Hong Kong) based on the boundaries of the present colony. Apart from control of defence and foreign affairs, the present communist leadership is prepared to allow a democratically-elected government, under overall Beijing control, to administer the region. The Xianggang government would be responsible for its own commercial relations with other countries and would maintain its capitalist system and position as a free port and world financial centre.

As well as the free flow of capital in the trading base, the communist leadership has pledged itself to maintain political freedoms of the press, religion, residence and travel. Mr Ji Pengfei, director of Beijing's Hong Kong and Macau affairs office, even pledged himself to uphold the political rights of Kuomintang and Taiwanese organisations in the future administrative region.

WHETHER ANYONE seriously believes everything Beijing is saying is another question. But the best guarantee Hong Kong has for minimising direct interference in its affairs from the communist leadership is to remain prosperous and profitable.

Clearly, apart from ending the 'national disgrace' of the 19th century Chinese statesman, Li Honzchang, in allowing a foreign power to control Chinese soil, the communist leadership wants to use Hong Kong's mini 'economic miracle' to fuel its own modernisation programme.

But the legacy of distrust between Beijing and Hong Kong's Cantonese residents, and their fear of future persecution, remains. Lee Cheuk Yan, a spokesperson for the Christian Industrial Committee, part of the small but growing trade union sector, said: 'Local people dislike the British but at the same time they are afraid of the communists, although they recognise Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong.'

The greatest fear is for their own economic prosperity under Beijing's sovereignty. Concern has already been expressed for the health of the ageing Deng Xiaoping, now 82. Whether or not his successors will carry on with the new pragmatic economic policies, is also in doubt. His two 'appointed' successors, Chinese premier, Zhao Ziyang, and Hu Yaobang, secretary-general of the Chinese communist party, are not thought to command enough support in the crucial People's Liberation Army to ensure a smooth succession. And a return of the leftist faction in Beijing could spell an end to any hopes of autonomy.

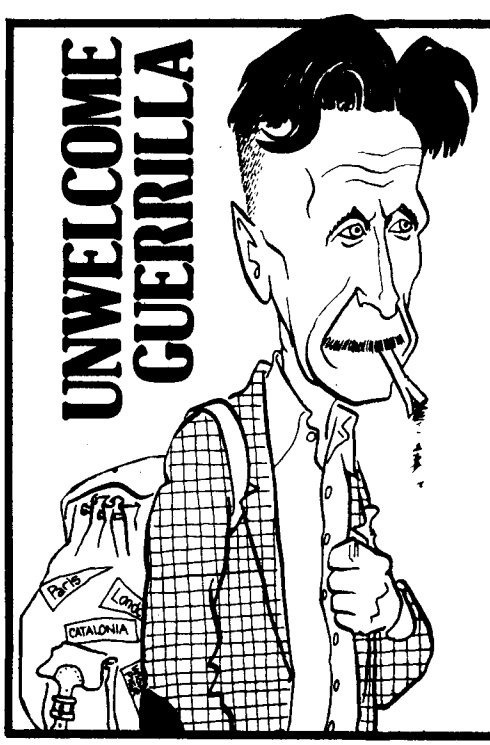
There is also a deep fear of Beijing's suppression of religion and its social policies — particularly the 'one-child' policy, which strikes at the heart of the family-orientated Chinese culture. But in the end, as both the British and Chinese governments realise, there is very little that Hong Kong's working classes can do about it. They have nowhere to go — short of a catastrophic wave of immigration in the style of the Vietnamese 'boat people'.

FOR THE 'HONGS', the colony's rich and powerful Chinese business community, the rules are obviously different and most of Beijing's policy statements have been directed towards assuaging their fears. Ever since the first panic in September 1982, Chinese businessmen have desperately been moving their capital out of Hong Kong and trying to internationalise their assets. One prominent businessman, Fung King Hay, of Sun Hung Kei Securities Ltd, had already sold his considerable assets for a 4 per cent share in the huge American brokers, Merrill Lynch, long before the British trading house, Jardine Matheson, virtually the colony's founder, moved its registration to Bermuda.

Tempted by offers of residence permits and investment opportunities, Chinese investors, who own at least 60 per cent of the huge capital assets and make up nearly 90 per cent of Hong Kong's business community, have started to move to pastures new. The result is that nearly all sectors of the economy have been bled of capital. The going rate for a Dominican passport is £100,000 and both the US and Canada provide working visas in return for investing sums of up to $25 million and employing three to five nationals.

Beijing's hopes of stemming the outflow of domestic capital lie in building up Hong Kong's democratic machinery, rusting away under the present colonial administration — and in its final international agreement with Britain. But both sides have refused to allow for a referendum on their final accord. 'Neither side can be sure of the outcome,' said Lau Nai Keung, chairman of a pro-Beijing intellectual pressure group, Meeting Point. Although he admits the 'bad record' of the Mao years, he sees the issue in terms of the ultimate goal of Chinese re-unification and a question of national identity. 'The question is: Do I want to be Chinese and in China? If I don't, then the sooner I get out the better. If I don't go from Hong Kong then I have clearly got to fight for a better life, fight for democracy here.'

For others, hopes of a Xianggang showcase, as part of Beijing's eventual aim to re-unite China in one prosperous stable whole, are too risky. Paul Ngung, sales director of Luks Industrial Co, one of the biggest private electronic employers, said: 'You have got five years to get out to Taipei (Taiwan), otherwise you could get trapped here.' □



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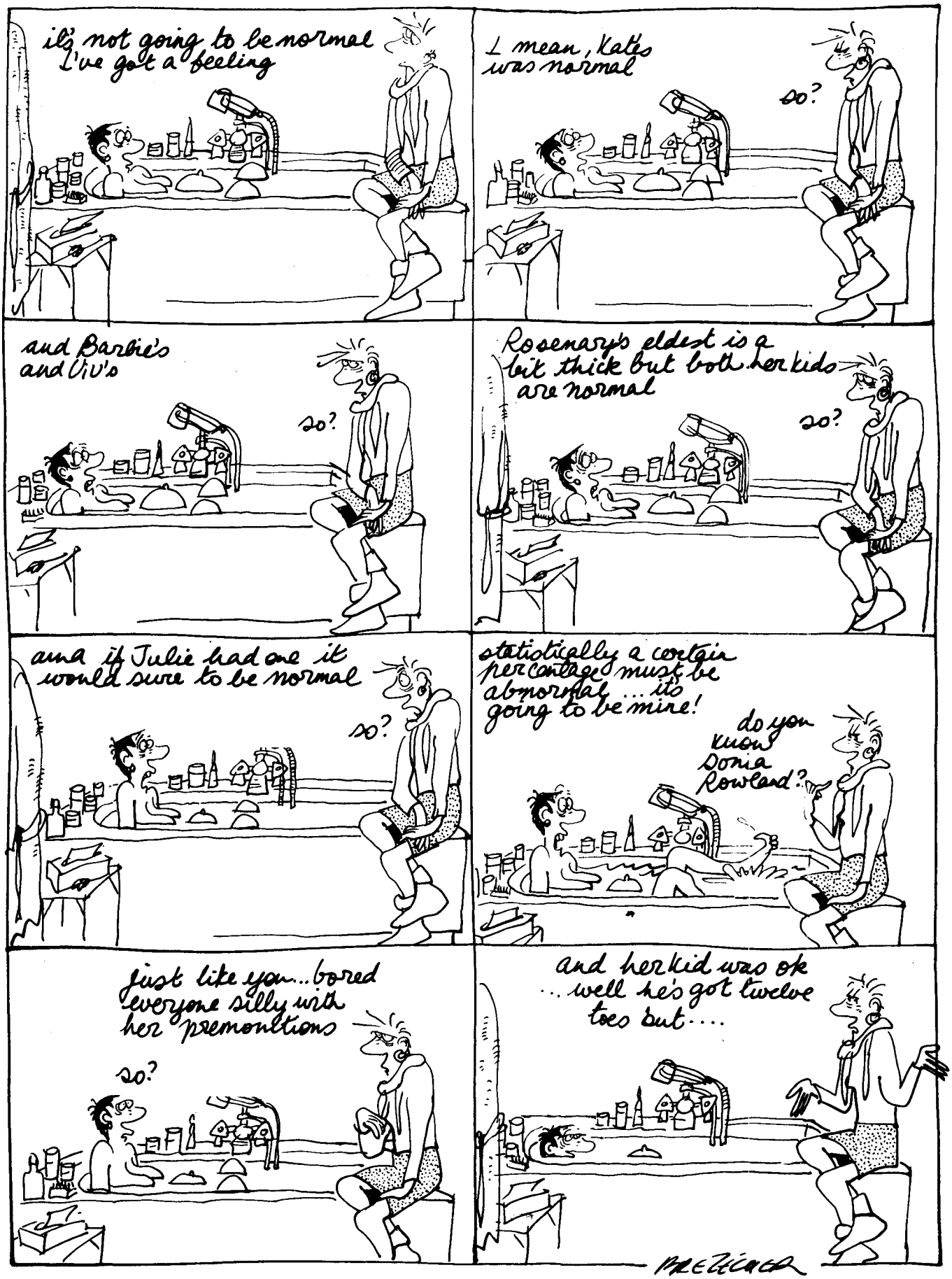
BRETECHER

NORMAL REACTION


it's not going to be normal I've got a feeling
so?
I mean, Kate's was normal
so?
and Barbie's and Liv's
so?
Rosemary's eldest is a bit thick but both her kids are normal
so?
and if Julie had one it would sure to be normal
so?
statistically a certain percentage must be abnormal... its going to be mine!
do you know Donia Rowland?
just like you... bored everyone silly with her premonitions
so?
and her kid was ok ... well he's got twelve toes but....
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

But what if you *are* a woman?

Josie Edwards, Labour Party Women's Action Committee

So the *NS* is creeping around to an awareness of women and their needs ('. . . but what if you're a woman?', 27 April). Peter Kellner's article reaches the usual conclusions about job apartheid for women in the worst work, the problems of combining work and home and so on, but in asking 'Why have such differences occurred?' Kellner ignores the structural, political reasons for this terrible state of affairs.

Women have been systematically kept from positions of influence in the party to which, as the worst off in society, they should naturally look to for support — the Labour Party. Anna Coote's radical criticism of the party's misnamed Alternative Economic Strategy (as non-alternative and conventional a piece of Keynesianism as you could find) is well known, though it is worth reiterating that a manifesto that looks at wage levels, poverty, etc, from the point of view of the needs of a married-man-'n'-2-kids is clearly about as liberated as the Inland Revenue, who treat women's earnings in much the same way.

Hope springs eternal, though, and perhaps you can bring yourself to print something practical about women's fight for a better deal rather than misty generalities. The Labour Party's Women's Conference is coming up in Swansea (12-14 May) and the Labour Party's (unofficial) Women's Action Committee (WAC) will be once again pursuing with vigour its proposals for constitutional reforms which will give women a real say in the party.

These include positive discrimination on shortlists of candidates and the election of the Women's Section of the National Executive Committee, by the Women's Conference. The National Labour Women's Committee has agreed to recommend acceptance of resolutions on these and other points to the Women's Conference, but this position has only been reached by pressure and organisation on the part on WAC; over 50, or a quarter, of the resolutions tabled at the Women's Conference are on these themes.

The committee has also agreed to a change to the rules to allow Constituency Labour Parties to obtain an additional woman, delegate to annual conference, and has at length agreed to the payment of child-care expenses for women delegates to the committee, again after continuous pressure from WAC.

Those interested in tackling the practical exclusion of women from Labour politics — rather than reading learned articles, should join WAC (£5, £2.50 unwaged, to Ruth Raymond, 16 Milverton Crescent, Leamington Spa). Or come and listen to WAC at Women's Conference.

Draining the Euro-gravy lake

Hilary Barnard, London E3

While exposing the squalid arrangements for Euro-parliamentarians' allowances (*NS* 20 April), Peter Kellner neglects a simpler solution which would avoid the charge that Labour is freeloading off its MEPs. At present, each Labour MEP employs at least one researcher who promptly becomes an 'expert' on the Common Agricultural Policy. Instead it should be a requirement of the British Labour Group's collective work that they pool their resources and make them available to the party for EEC-related work.

Labour claims to be committed to challenging the power of multinational capital and reversing the arms race, yet only a pitifully small proportion of its resources goes on international work. Kellner's proposed solution would divert even part of that proportion to other purposes. The answer should rather be that the labour movement will get its maximum return from the efforts of Labour MEPs through recognition of the work they have to do and its integration with national campaigning.

Awful offal

Sarah Tennyson, Luddesdown, Kent

My dear Jeremy Lewis (*NS* 20 April), I honestly find it hard to imagine how offal could *fail* to upset us. It looks so horribly like what it is: the hacked and slightly decaying remnants of a creature that was recently alive. And the logical reaction to such a sight surely *cannot* be what you suggest: simply to stiffen one's upper lip and shake the horror away. No more can it be (I agree with you here) to retreat to the safety of such evasions as cling-film-packaged pork chops.

More more intelligent response, I suggest, would be to push the tripe and onions (or tongue, or heart, or brains) to one side, and ponder a while how our 'squeamishness' is so very often a visceral reaction to signs of sickness, or suffering, or cruelty, or mutilation. In other words, do we know in our guts why it is that we shouldn't eat *theirs?*

Why don't the English . . .?

Martin Green, Penzance, Cornwall

The indifference which the people of this country feel towards those who live in the benighted province of Northern Ireland is compounded by ignorance. Your journal, which occasionally directs a shaft of light which penetrates that ignorance, pointed by the able pen of your correspondent Mary Holland, is equally guilty. In you editorial of 20 April, you wrote of Bloody Sunday, 'when 13 Irish citizens were killed by the British Army in Derry'. In truth, 13 British citizens were killed by the British Army in Derry. The national status of the citizens of that province is sometimes even confusing to the residents, as when an irate lady, after yet another disaster, turned to a BBC reporter and said: 'What you English don't understand about we Irish is that we're British'.

Violence and nonviolence

Cliff Jordan, Sheffield

In response to Dr Weaver's letter about 'Stop the City' (13 April): I did not 'perform' at that demonstration for TV or the press. I acted in accordance with my beliefs, my rejection of capitalism and specifically the role of the City in exploitation and oppression. So, I believe, did many others.

To splatter memorials to tyrants with red paint — however the press reports it — to dance on the roof of a Rolls-Royce — however the press reports it — to claim and exercise the freedom to walk in our streets — however the press reports it — are better ways of moving towards a world of freedom and cooperation than dissociating oneself from anything imperfect.

There was some violence: I witnessed several unjustifiable attacks by blue-uniformed mobs on individual demonstrations. There was frustration and anger. The TV images, predictably enough, may have been of riotous disorder. But that there were only *two* police casualties, despite 440 arrests and incredible police provocation, is a tribute to the enormous restraint (or inhibition) of the thousands present, and the great commitment to nonviolence of a large portion of them.

Those who wish to reduce violence should not avoid future 'Stop the City' demonstrations, but instead concern themselves to intervene effectively against the main source of violence — the police — rather than look the other way while others respond by turning it into a battleground.

Watching the watch

Julian Scola, Liberation Research and Education Trust, 9 Poland St, London W1

In September 1983 the Metropolitan Police launched the neighbourhood watch scheme as part of the Commissioner's strategy for greater police-public cooperation. Although criticised by many as being divisive and an intrusion of privacy, the Met has already claimed massive reductions in burglaries in the areas in which the scheme has been introduced.

However, very little is really known about the impact of the scheme on the communities in which it has been set up, or indeed about its significance in terms of overall policing strategies. In response to this the GLC has awarded the Liberation Research and Education Trust a grant to monitor and produce a report on neighbourhood watch in London.

The Trust would, therefore, welcome any information from *New Statesman* readers about neighbourhood watch in their area. Copies of leaflets advertising local scheme meetings or general information regarding the impact of the scheme in readers' neighbourhoods would be gratefully received.

The Trust has produced a working paper on the background and planning for neighbourhood watch (50p including postage). Further information from the above address.

MADAME BLAVATSKY

INCOMPARABLE GENIUS OR DESPICABLE FRAUD?

The only way to resolve this problem is to read *her* works for oneself, and not what others, unable or unwilling to study and comprehend her monumental works, have said and written. If you are interested in discovering a philosophy, worthy of the highest intellect, embracing all religion and philosophy, and much science, we suggest you write for a reading list to:

The Blavatsky Trust (B)
P.O. Box 16, London W3 6HS

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Naomi Mitchison

By his works

Hilaire Belloc
A.N. WILSON *Hamish Hamilton* £12.95

Richard Willson

This is a very thorough view of the life of Hilaire Belloc. The writer, I must suppose, shares many of Belloc's beliefs, if not his Roman Catholicism. I am a humanist with a strong mistrust of organised religion. Thus, I am out of sympathy with some of Mr Wilson's attitudes and admirations over Hilaire Belloc. Yet there is no other poet of whose work I know so much by heart, and find myself delightedly chewing over. Belloc after all wrote his own epitaph '... I hope it may be said, "His sins were scarlet but his books were read".' I would suggest the substitution of *verse* for *books*. He wrote so many ill-constructed, careless and factually untrue books that they put out the taste of the good ones, his early *Path to Rome*, *Cruise of the Nona* and perhaps *The Four Men*. The rest work their way up to the unreachable part of our shelves, while *The Bad Child's Book of Beasts*, *Cautionary Tales for Children* and all their successors, including my favourite, *The Modern Traveller*, stay firmly within reach; some at least of the poetry stays close at hand, too, and probably will while Auden and others move gradually into oblivion.

This biography has to be, in a sense, an apology. Belloc on the Jews is no longer palatable, even if the big monster that he was hunting was really the money-oligarchy, whatever its ethnic origin, with all its capability for corrupting politicians.

Belloc envisaged not only a re-converted England — did he ever go as far north, even, as Edinburgh? — and a Catholic Europe (he appears not to have noticed the great French anti-clerical movement). He was perhaps too much influenced by his friends, many of whom were handsome, brave, beautiful, seductive, rich. The charming aura covered things like the burning of dons' manuscripts and, later, attraction to Mussolini which Belloc shared. Belloc wouldn't have cared about any don's book; he didn't like dons, nor any of the middle class — nor the uppers, unless their riches were hereditary and spent in a seemly way. Or unless, of course, they were good Catholics and spread the faith.

He did, in a way, like the workers and was against laws that closed their pubs. He knew about poverty and miserable wages, but could not accept that trade unions were one immediate way out of it. Instead, he wanted everyone to enjoy 'three acres and a cow', which might have been geographically possible — if economically disastrous — in Europe nearly a century ago. These independent citizens would have been governed by kings who obeyed the Church. The only Church. And, of course, Belloc loved to have a good fight about it all, and a good laugh.

We used to go down to King's Land in Sussex in the late Twenties with Liz Belloc — so maligned in this book! — my dear friend, the only one of his children to inherit the poetic ability. I loved the house and found I could always write there. On Sundays they went to Mass, we heathens slept in, then all ate a huge breakfast and went out, rather unkindly, to play road hockey in the path of the Anglican church-goers. H.B. was sweet to us; we had salad made in the way described in this book and some lovely bit of cooking with it. My husband knew enough about wine to be able to comment acceptably, Liz and I perhaps exchanged poems. And then H.B. sang! He had wonderful tunes for the *Shanty of the Nona*, *Ha'nacker Mill* and *The Owers Light*. Or else he would produce some rhyme which never got into print, like the Billy-go-blink stories: 'The respectable person of Lombard Street,/Sedate and solemn was he/With his city frock-coat and his flower complete,/A beautiful sight to see./ He swaggered about and he balanced his cane/ But ah, it was just as he feared;/When he got to the corner of Petticoat Lane/Billy-go-blink appeared./He trotted him round as nobody can/ But as Billy-go-blink knows how./The bobbies took up that respectable man/And nobody knows him now.'

This book tells, interestingly, what shaped the young Hilaire: his family's lost riches, his short and unpleasant time in the French army, the influence of Cardinal Manning, his journey across America to find 'the girl who loves me' waiting for him instead of becoming a nun. She bore him five children, following his every wish as far as she could, and then died. Then his various struggles with journalism, the moderate success of his books and his obsessive travels: 'I'm angry and I'm going away to sea.' His sister, Marie Belloc-Lowndes, was, irritatingly, more successful, though her novels have scarcely survived.

There is a good deal here about G.K. Chesterton who also imagined a pleasant land of England, not torn up by agribusinesses hungry for the wheat subsidy. Both of them felt that, somehow, they could arrive at their goals by shouting — in verse, in polemical books or in journals which came out for a time and then disappeared. We all read *The Eye Witness*, forerunner of *Private Eye*, and I cannot agree with Mr Wilson when he asserts that people begin to disregard corruption when they see too much about it in the newspapers. My feeling is that we, the public, become increasingly angry and demand change. But it is always a good idea to change the targets. Neither Belloc nor

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Chesterton tried writing serious and lengthy books of the kind which H.G. Wells was writing and which, though now dated, had a considerable effect in their time.

H.B. tried journalism on several levels, but he was never single-minded enough for this difficult profession. He poured out books and pamphlets, quarrelled with agents, expected that others would take down his dictation and look after the final typescript. His friends and children died or were killed in wars. He could not have cared less for the welfare state; all states were *ipso facto* awful. He rushed about, went to parties, but there were fewer of these and his suitcase got heavier, his demands on his hosts more difficult. It was harder to keep up King's Land, which still eschewed electricity; the fact that the many lamps were trimmed depended on his daughter Eleanor. He wore himself out before time, went to Mass more often. At last, in 1953, came darkness and the end of it.

Perhaps a dozen of his all-too-many books will pass the censorship of time, but read them and know him. □

PHILOSOPHY
Ted Honderich

Which am I?

Reasons and Persons
DEREK PARFIT *Oxford* £17.50

Let us have a little science fiction, in the aid of a greater thing, the truth about ourselves. I need to get to Mars more quickly than before, and so I must go by Teletransporter. I am a bit nervous, never having been teletransported before, but the sight of my wife reassures me — she has, often, and *she* is all right. I press the green button and lose consciousness. The Scanner records the exact state of all my cells, destroying my brain and body, and transmits the information to Mars at the speed of light. There, the Replicator creates out of new material a brain and body exactly like mine. All goes well and it is in that body that I wake up. Of course, given the connection of body and mind, I have all the memories, beliefs, plans and so on that I had before.

Some philosophers are chary about the use of such pieces of imagination. They do not include Derek Parfit, who properly maintains that they discover to us our beliefs about ourselves in our ordinary lives. His extraordinary book, an exemplar of unflagging and meticulous logical sequence, does not depend on such imaginings but does begin from them in the most fundamental of its four parts. It is possible to feel that a book so consummate and so manifestly significant legitimates all its methods. That is a good thing, since sometimes a certain punctiliousness and what might be called the higher doggedness put a good deal more strain on us than anything about Scanners and Replicators.

The part of the book in question has to do with the problem of personal identity. What is it that makes a person at two different times one and the same person? One philosophical answer is spatio-temporal continuity — very roughly, the continued existence of a body, or at any rate enough of a brain. On such a view the piece of imagining is a nonsense. I didn't travel, I died. A second philosophical answer is psychological continuity — partly, and very roughly, my being able to remember each day things that happened to me the previous day. On some versions of this view the piece of imagining is not a nonsense. I did not die, but travelled, and some days later it was the person she loves who came home to my wife. On a third view, where personal identity is some deep fact, perhaps a matter of such a separately existing mental entity as a Cartesian ego or a soul, it may be that it was not I who came home.

Parfit's own view is in part an enlargement of the second, and can be approached by further imagining. Suppose that the Scanner transmits its information not only to a Replicator on Mars, but also to one on Io. It cannot be that the two Replicas are me, despite the two chains of psychological continuity. It must be that if some Y is the same person as the earlier X, there is psychological continuity *and* there is no other person Z who is also psychologically continuous with X. If so, my personal identity, since it depends on facts well and truly outside of me, is in a sense contingent or accidental.

Does personal identity matter much? We might think about this, as Parfit does, in terms of a case where, although I am teletransported to Mars, my brain and body are not destroyed. Still, the machine damages me, and I have only a few days to live. I am about to die, as they say, and the different person, my Replica, will live on. Does it matter that the person I am is ending if my Replica, psychologically continuous with myself, lives on? Parfit's answer is that it is the continuity that matters, and that my way of dying is about as good as ordinary survival. He is not without arguments for the conclusion or, as throughout, rejoinders to objections.

Nor does he lack arguments for another conclusion. Personal identity is a matter in part of psychological connectedness, and that is a matter of degree. We can think of cases where my Replica has some but not all of my memories and the like. It may be, here, that personal identity is indeterminate. That is, I can ask 'Am I about to die?' but the question does not have an answer. It is an empty question — there exists no fact which gives an answer.

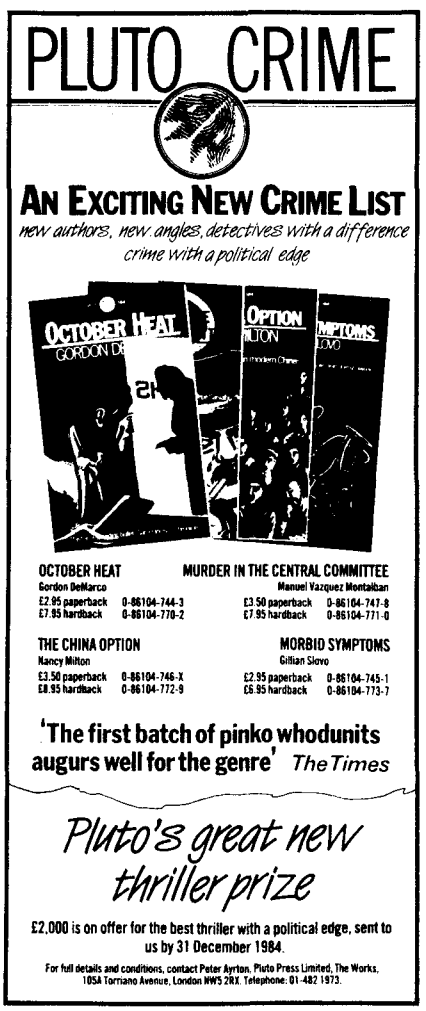
Since we ordinarily believe something like one of the rejected views about the criterion of personal identity — that it is a deep fact — and also that it is personal identity that matters, and that it is always determinate, we have false views about our lives as they are. As a consequence we care more about them, and our deaths, than we should. We also make mistakes about the large subjects of morality and rationality.

The first two parts of the book have much to do with the Self-Interest Theory, that for each of us at bottom there is one supremely rational aim, that his or her life go, for him or her, as well as possible. It is self-defeating since, for example, *aiming* at one's happiness is not the way to get it, but that is not a fatal objection. It *is* refuted by a consideration having to do with the truth about personal identity.

The first two parts also have much to do with several families of moralities. One consists in consequentialism, to the effect that the one ultimate moral aim is that the consequences of actions and also of personal dispositions be as good as possible. Another is made up of philosophical outlooks which attend greatly more to agents than to consequences. A man may suppose, for example, that it is wrong for *him* to coerce others, even in the instance where doing so would have the further consequence of less coercion overall. There is also ordinary morality, which importantly concerns loyalties to particular people, notably one's children. It is found to be wanting, and in need of revision. This has to do in part with an individual's inclination to think he or she does not do wrong when his or her activities make only an indiscriminable difference to an outcome, say starvation.

The fourth part of *Reasons and Persons* has to do with future persons, questions of population. One of its subjects is the Repugnant Conclusion, to the effect that we should increase population despite the fact that people will have lives barely worth living. This conclusion, like certain others, seems to follow from what are taken to be unexceptionable premises. It is not without struggle that Parfit gives up hope, no doubt for the time being, of finding a general view that is by his lights satisfactory.

No one, save the author's Replica, could be in agreement with all of this campaign of a book. Some will doubt the coherence of some of its conceptions and transitions. No one will get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hold of it without buckling down and, very likely, hard labour. Those are lesser truths about it. A greater is that it is splendid. It is the product of at least the 16 years of reflection that its author has spent as a fellow of All Souls in Oxford. That institution, which enables those in it to escape burdens which distract the rest of us, notably those burdens so lightly described as teaching loads, is rightly not without its detractors. *Reasons and Persons*, of which this review gives not much more than a glimpse, offers an argument to its defenders. They could not ask for better. □

GERMAN HISTORY
Nicholas Jacobs

Cracks of doom

Communism in Germany under the Weimar Republic
BEN FOWKES *Macmillan* £20 & £7.95
The Weimar Years
JOHN WILLETT *Thames & Hudson* £12.50

It seems at first surprising that, apart from two war-time sketches, Ben Fowkes's study is the first in English devoted exclusively to the German Communist Party (KPD) from 1918 to 1933. In these years the party averaged some 10 per cent of the vote and 200,000 members per annum; in November 1932 nearly six million Germans voted for it. But more important than the statistics is the question of the KPD's role in the division of the Left which helped Hitler to power.

Reading Fowkes's book helps to explain why it has not been done before. On the one hand, it is difficult to believe that anyone whose sympathies were not on the Left could have the necessary motivation and resources to disentangle the complexities of KPD policy and inner party debate. On the other, for anyone on the Left the story is an extremely depressing one, of bitter internecine sectarianism, from 1923 increasingly intertwined with the factionalism of the Russian party, which ended only in Hitler's concentration camps and Stalin's purges (in which half as many — 43 — German communist leaders met their deaths as were killed under Hitler).

Fowkes's sober account almost eschews judgments, apart from a careful summing-up. Only an occasional wry phrase reveals his impatience or surprise over a particular position. In the circumstances this is understandable, even if it does make for a somewhat dryly written book.

The killing while in custody of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht under the new social democratic administration early in 1919 is often seen as a major factor in the fatal split in the German Left. But Fowkes's account of the pre- and early history of the KPD makes clear how deep the divisions already were on the Left, and the extent to which these deaths were the effect and ultimate symbol of that split rather than a cause of it. In addition Fowkes shows how deeply divided the KPD was within itself, from the very outset, over major issues — trade union policy, parliament, the foundation in Moscow of the Third International — and in its attitude to the initially defensive uprising of 1919 as a result of which Luxemburg and Liebknecht and Leo Jogiches, another outstanding KPD leader, lost their lives. The profound inner-party division was never resolved, and it meant that the KPD came very soon to rely on the Russian party and on Comintern advisers who initially arbitrated on and eventually determined German party policy.

Fowkes's account of how this happened, and how the best KPD leaders — like Paul Levi and Ernst Meyer — tried in vain to resist the worst Russian advice, is painstaking and clear. After the first abortive offensive in March 1921 the party successfully steered a united front course until the crisis year of 1923 when the fall of a government, the French occupation of the Ruhr and the currency breakdown impelled another doomed KPD bid for power. From then on, more or less from Lenin's death early in 1924 and Stalin's pronouncement of 'socialism in one country', KPD strategy, and the fierceness with which it was debated, was heavily dominated by the guidance, or misguidance, of the Comintern, and was increasingly affected by the growing Soviet party faction fights. It was not that the Russians, through the Comintern, simply imposed a line from outside. What makes the story of the KPD so fascinating is that it comprised every imaginable left-wing position and deviation — from near anarchism on the extreme Left to 'national bolshevism' on the Right — at any one time, embodied in vociferous and articulate factions, so that a line could be imposed by astute support of one faction over another. Thus, although the practice of calling social democrats fascists was originated by Zinoviev in 1924, it was eagerly taken up by ultra-leftists in the KPD shortly after, to re-emerge in 1928 with the ultra-left line, encouraged by the Comintern, which smoothed Hitler's path.

Fowkes's book inevitably invites comparison with E.H. Carr's account of the KPD in the sections on the Comintern of his *A History of Soviet Russia* and in *The Twilight of the Comintern*. In writing mainly from the German sources, Fowkes supplies greater detail of the debate within the German party, and takes account of the significant regional differences in what was at first a very non-centralised party. However, because the KPD was for most of its existence dominated by Soviet policy, and because Carr's understanding of the complex relationship at all levels between what he called 'the two pariah states of Europe' is so unrivalled, his remains the more authoritative source.

The conscious limits of Fowkes's study — which should perhaps have been better reflected in its title — preclude consideration of the KPD's cultural achievements. These are illustrated — along with much else — in Willett's extremely rich album. The excellence of the pictures, and their effective montage in a Bauhaus layout (though in an incongruously traditional binding), should not divert people from the lucid text, which outlines the different artistic achievements and movements, linking them where possible to historical events and the relevant French, Italian and Soviet cultural influences. □

Lachlan Mackinnon

The suitcase

Last thing, after the doors, the windows
and the light in the hall, I come up
and for fear the cat might stifle the baby
I put the suitcase across the stairs.

We are walled in by dreams of travel.
I know that by now every city
has its village of exiles, conspiring
over chess in the back rooms of bookshops.

The voices of the street rise to our window,
few of them human. We fall asleep.
Life is not a permit to live
but a ball of fur sticking in my throat.

It is brown and covered with labels
and we keep the blankets for guests in it.
I touch it every night, I do it
last thing, after the doors, the windows.

HISTORY
Alun Howkins

Our own past

The Common People: A History from the Norman Conquest to the Present
J.F.C. HARRISON *Croom Helm* £12.95
Flamingo £3.95

One of the most powerful strands in the British tradition of radical historiography is the one which places supreme emphasis on making the history of the poor readily available. From the worker students who, in the last years of the 19th century, read J. Thorold Rogers's *Six Centuries of Work and Wages* or J. R. Green's *A Short History of the English People*, to the stalwarts of the WEA in the last few years, there is a belief that simply 'telling the truth' about the past is a vitally important part of a socialist education.

To many of these self-taught students this exercise was (and is) synonymous with finding out about the history of the poor, those whom the 'condescension' of academic history had cast out as unworthy of study. J.F.C. Harrison is himself of this tradition. A 'grammar school boy', he served as an infantry officer in the war and returned, as did many distinguished socialist and labour historians of his generation, to work in adult education, before going on to a distinguished academic career. This book fits into this ethos, being a 'people's history' designed for those in the WEA, or its wider

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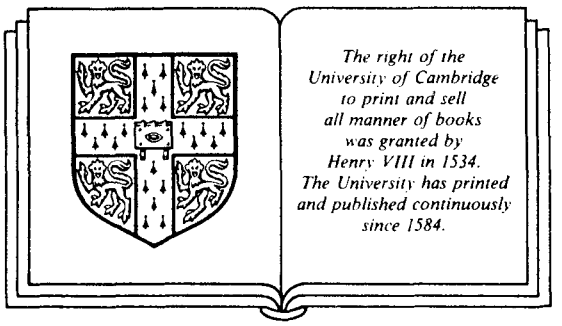
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world, those who want to find out the basic lineages of *their own* past.

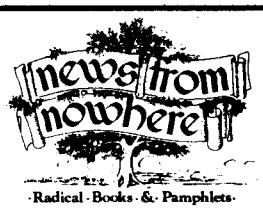
This is not a criticism but a recommendation. Everything I know about history is based on the WEA classes I went to in the early 1960s in Oxfordshire and, as a tutor for the WEA and in adult education ever since, I have tried to repay this debt. For people like the young worker I was in the early 1960s Harrison's book will be invaluable.

'The starting point must be those things which were central in the life of labouring people', Harrison writes in his introduction. As a result, the actual chronology of history ought to be revised: 'there will be strange silences in places where the din of conflicting voices was anticipated.' The book's structure rejects the conventional periodisation of British history, based almost entirely on constitutional or political history, and substitutes one derived more clearly from economic or labour history. Thus the 19th century is divided at 1880, the beginning of the 'modern' working class or 'the people' as Harrison describes them. Similarly the 18th century is divided at 1780, the beginning of industrialisation.

Within Harrison's four divisions the material selected is bound to be contentious. Certainly any academic reviewer would have a whale of a time selecting which of his petty hobby-horses was 'missed out'. That would be to miss the point. The book seeks to provide a guide through a complex academic terrain which is also the lived experience of those long dead. It could be argued that such an exercise has no value, that the subject is too complex for such a 'general treatment'. Perhaps, but such comments inevitably come from those with the time and 'education' to be swallowed by complexity; for the vast majority of people such a luxury is undreamed of.

My quarrel with the book might be that Harrison has not gone far enough in changing the 'chronology'. He himself says 'we need an alternative periodisation based on changes in popular experiences and perceptions'. Yet we still have a world which is determined by the élites in many respects. One way around the problem might have been to have discussed popular perceptions of the past as a preliminary. For instance, the notion of the 'golden age' is an ever-present factor in popular memory. Similarly, periodisation is often very different in folk memory, especially in pre-industrial or transitional societies. A chapter which surveyed some of these ideas and beliefs might well have illuminated popular ideas and challenged conventional chronologies.

This is however an argument, not a judgment. In the end the book must be judged on its own merits and purpose. In those terms it is part of a 'popular' tradition of people's histories which seek, in great sweeps, to explain the history of the great mass of people to their descendants. In this it succeeds. I don't know if it's 'a classic', but it will go on my shelf with Thorold Rogers and A. L. Morton as one of those books which I constantly lend to new and slightly confused mature students who want an introduction to the history of ordinary people, or which form the basis of any 'book box' in a WEA course on social history. □



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ETHICS
David Montrose

Hide & seek

Secrets: On the Ethics of Concealment and Revelation
SISSELA BOK *Oxford* £12.95

Sissela Bok abhors narrow definitions. *Lying,* her previous 'exploration of concrete moral issues' (Harvester, 1978), ranged from the white lies of everyday conversation to the 'big lies' of global politics, and scrutinised nearly all the intervening byways of terminological inexactitude. This book, in similar fashion, extends from the most minor of personal secrets to the most major of Official Secrets, from neighbourhood gossip to undercover police work. Bok, a moral philosopher at Harvard, is concerned with general principles — when and how secrets should be kept or disclosed — rather than specific cases.

In *Lying,* Bok started from the presumption that intentional deceit, though capable of justification, was *'prima facie* wrong'. No equivalent presumption could be made here: different standards attach to different kinds of secrecy and disclosure. It is, of course, easy enough to aver that private individuals might justifiably keep secrets except when there is good reason why they should not, and that the opposite applies to governments. This simply leaves unsettled the knotty problem of specifying those good reasons. Between such extremes, though, is a vast middle ground. What about the secrets of public figures, of doctors and lawyers, of businesses? What leeway should be granted the assorted species of investigator? When are leaking and 'whistleblowing' defensible?

Bok, to her credit, reaches for no reductive answers. Admittedly, for the general reader, there are inevitable *longueurs* as, with a philosopher's precision, she defines and qualifies. To simplify, though, would be to misrepresent, for her analysis, especially of concealment and revelation in public affairs, is all about fine distinctions. Although in favour of openness wherever possible, Bok obviously recognises that secrecy does have some legitimate place in the professions, in commerce, science, military activities, government. The trick is ensuring that it occupies its proper place and is not stretched to cover up 'compromising facts', as when the right to privacy (Mark Thatcher's 'Oman deal') or the requirements of national security (the Pentagon Papers) are invoked to obscure matters of permissible public interest. Bok's aim is always to identify the point where justified secrecy ends and rationalised suppression begins. Not that her enthusiasm for freedom of information is unlimited: she is equally keen to distinguish between legitimate investigation -- in journalism, social research and policing -- and illegitimate intrusion. On both sides of the coin, Bok rejects the utilitarian principle of vindication-by-results.

Bok is particularly astute in her examination of a factor that is usually not examined at all: the effects of secrecy on those who exercise it. She documents how, through insulating decision-makers from 'criticism and feedback', secrecy often causes poor judgment, how it impairs their moral discrimination by reducing accountability. One of her most telling illustrations deals with Jimmy Carter's helicopter raid to rescue the Iranian hostages: its failure was at least partly due to excessive security arrangements which prevented co-ordination between members of the task force. Bok also points out how unethical practices can rebound against their users. 'Disinformation', for instance, may yield short-term advantages; but, once seen through, it becomes a long-term injury to the disinformers' credibility.

Secrets might not appeal immediately to readers who relish a vigorously polemical approach to the subject. Bok's tone, as befits her stance, is resolutely neutral, while the very thoroughness and precision with which she arrives at her proposals of what constitutes ethical behaviour can, paradoxically, make them seem vague and inconclusive when compared with more simplistic formulations. At bottom, though, *Secrets* is a profoundly radical book: one that advances codes of individual and collective conduct so at odds with the pragmatic mores of private and public life that Bok appears positively ingenuous. But then ethics is about what behaviour ought to be, not what practical considerations make it. *Secrets,* by propounding ideal balances between the several types of concealment and revelation, serves as a salutary yardstick against which all our shabby expediencies might be measured. Bok performs at least one instructive act of measurement for us by choosing Britain for her exemplary model of governmental secretiveness:

> . . . its Official Secrets Act of 1911 would, if taken literally, make it possible to accuse officials of a criminal offense who disclose even trivial government information. The act has never been applied so stringently, but it has nevertheless contributed to official caution and to a climate of administrative secretiveness; and it has fostered apprehension on the part of citizens and the press about whether or not to probe into topics the government wishes to shield.

Elsewhere, Bok mentions how 'Leaking has a symbiotic relationship with secrecy. Without secrecy there would be no need to leak information.' There are no prizes for guessing whether concealer or revealer appears in the better light if Bok's principles are applied to the Sarah Tisdall case. □

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Citizen Ken

JOHN CARVEL
Chatto/Hogarth Press £8.95 & £2.95

Ken Livingstone has done for local government what his Victorian namesake did for Africa — put it on the map. He is the first local politician to have had a book devoted to him before the age of 40 and to be the principal target of a major item of government policy, namely the abolition of the GLC.

Livingstone has managed to overcome the limitations of local politics. Projected on to the national stage by a media eager to have his guts for garters, he has become so well-known and successful that he was runner-up in the BBC's Man of the Year poll. It was, ironically, the media attacks which gave him the chance to appear frequently on TV and radio where his charm shone through so winningly that some of his popularity has even rubbed off on the bureaucratic and Byzantine GLC.

To gain and remain in power, Livingstone has played a careful game, building alliances around specific policies rather than aligning himself with factions of the left. He has also, argues Carvel, occasionally taken political stances, knowing they would be defeated, to retain his left-wing credentials.

Carvel reminds us that within a few months of taking office Livingstone's programme was in tatters and the Labour Group, wilting under the media assault, was considering throwing the towel in by going into majority opposition. The GLC had failed to stop the sales of new council properties initiated by the Tories, it had lost so much of the government's grant that it was considering a rate rise of well over 100 per cent and the cheap fares policy had just been overturned by the courts. But, in fact, the defeat of 'Fares Fair' proved to be the turning point. The rejection by unelected judges of a popular manifesto commitment gave the GLC instant credibility and support. And the money saved from Fares Fair enabled the GLC to implement much of its manifesto programme with, except for one year, modest rate rises (and even, this year, a reduction).

While competently outlining these events, Carvel fails to provide any insight into Livingstone's political impact. He suggests that Livingstone won through because he's such a decent chap and that the media exposure gave him the chance to prove that. Carvel, constrained by the biographical format, sees Livingstone's impact simply in terms of his personality. In fact, Livingstone's real achievement is to have won considerable support by presenting socialist ideas in a popular way.

Christian Wolmar

Jesus: The Evidence

IAN WILSON *Weidenfeld* £10.95
Is Christianity True?
MICHAEL ARNHEIM *Duckworth* £7.95

There was a silly fuss about the LWT series of three programmes on Jesus over Easter. The idea of a critical treatment of the subject on television isn't new — it was done by the BBC with Don Cupitt seven years ago — and it isn't bad in theory. The result in practice is another matter. The screen version has been amply criticised by Hugo Williams (*NS* 20 April) and the book isn't much better. Ian Wilson was a consultant for the series, but his companion volume is editorially quite independent and doctrinally more orthodox. It probably represents the mainstream of belief among intelligent people who are neither credulous Christians nor incredulous sceptics, neither mere laymen nor real scholars.

Wilson follows current fashion in discounting the supernatural details of the birth, life and death of Jesus, in emphasising his Jewishness, in interpreting his miracles as natural faith-healing or hypnosis, in attributing the emergence of Christianity as a mysterious phenomenon and in attempting the usual leap of faith from the very little evidence there is to the world religion which is now so different from what it was 1900 years ago.

This is meant to be a popular book, but it still leaves out or slides round too many problems. The account of biblical criticism begins with the Christian scholars of the 19th century and doesn't mention the earlier critics. His account of the New Testament text refers to the recently discovered manuscripts from the Dead Sea and Nag Hammadi but scarcely mentions the earliest non-canonical Christian documents. His account of the theory that Jesus may be a mythical rather than a historical figure refers to the recent work of Professor G.A. Wells of Birkbeck College, London, but distorts and misunderstands it (it may be found in his books which are available from Pemberton Publishing).

So *Jesus: The Evidence* isn't really the book for anyone who wants a genuinely impartial discussion of the subject. Nor is *Is Christianity True?*. Michael Arnheim has produced a critique of Christianity which is polemical rather than scholarly and is vitiated not only by obvious bias but by factual carelessness. The old critiques by the freethought movement were just as hostile but much more accurate, and this new contribution represents a retreat rather than an advance in the still important discussion of the claims of the main religion of this country and our culture.

Nicolas Walter

The Healing Heart

NORMAN COUSINS *Norton* £10.95

The poets have known it for ages. Now it seems the medical profession may slowly be coming round to the same opinion. A study of unexplained sudden death in America put more than 50 per cent of cases down to what you or I would call a broken heart — 'loss of spouse, child, job, home, status'. More and more studies link cancer survival rates to psychological factors. Type A (hard-driven worriers), as distinct from Type B (placid plodders), are accepted heart attack risks.

Norman Cousins, whose unquenchable optimism enabled him to defeat a terrible collagen illness in 1964 by laughter and hope, had a heart attack in 1980. Relying on laughter, love, joy, will to live, healthy exercise and diet, he mustered his own defences against his (Type A) body's breakdown. *The Healing Heart* is his enthusiastic account of his success in taming the panic which he identifies as the chief enemy of the seriously ill. It makes soberly inspiring reading, for Mr Cousins is quick to point out that the major threat to health today is the foreign policies of our governments. Though the individual may be able to lead a healthy life, calm himself down and to some extent (Mr Cousins cites strong evidence) even bring his autonomic nervous system under his own control, personal happiness will go for nothing if they Drop the Big One and we all go down the chute. As well as a wonderful healing mechanism (celebrated by Mr Cousins) the human heart is still, as Blake wrote, a hungry gorge — especially in the seats of power.

Victoria Neumark

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BIOGRAPHY
Alison Hennegan

Trials of strength

A Portrait of Fryn: A Biography of F. Tennyson Jesse
JOANNA COLENBRANDER *Deutsch* £12.95

F. Tennyson Jesse was proud to number a saint *and* a poisoner among her forebears but her books suggest she was more fascinated by murder than holiness. For it is probably by her criminological works that she remains best known, notably for *A Pin to See the Peepshow* (her 1934 novel based on the 1923 trial of Edith Thompson and Frederick Bywater) and by her introductions to various volumes in the Notable British Trials series.

It was *The Lacquer Lady* (her 1929 novel of the British annexation of Burma) which she herself believed to be 'the book by which I should live'. In 1908 when she was still a student at the then famous Newlyn artists' colony (the place where her baptismal name, Winifried, became Fryniwyd, later Fryn), no one, including her, foresaw a future as a writer. Writing was a financial necessity, hastened by the refusal of Edith, her formidable mother, to support her beyond her majority. A loan from Nan (one of many women whom Edith held in romantic thrall) set Fryn up in a semi-basement flat in Chelsea. Thence she laid siege to Fleet Street.

Success was immediate. From 1912 until 1957, the year before her death, Fryn's output was prodigious. There were novels, short stories, and plays both singly and jointly authored with H.M. Harwood, 'Tottie', who became her husband, secretly in 1918, publicly in 1921. There were Despatches from the Western Front; journalism and poems; essays and criminological studies; open letters (by her and Tottie) to influential American friends, written to help bring America into the Second World War.

The oeuvre was almost 'too various', defying neat categorisation: both an achievement, acclaimed by critics as diverse as Rebecca West and Sydney Horler, and a marketing headache.

The achievement was the greater in that its creator was waging a series of personal battles: against addiction to morphia (misguidedly prescribed to combat the pain of a right hand smashed beyond repair by an aeroplane propellor); against childlessness (she suffered at least three miscarriages and never bore the baby she craved); against constant tormenting jealousy towards her husband's earlier mistress and illegitimate son which periodically flared out and took her to the very borders of insanity; and against increasingly frequent suicide attempts.

The young girl who to Rebecca West was, with Susan Ertz and Rosamond Lehmann, one of the day's three greatest beauties, exercised a golden, glowing charm over almost all comers and both sexes in the early days of her marriage. She entertained lavishly: eighty pairs of sheets and all of them needed. Woolf, Macaulay, Bowen, Compton-Burnett, Bagnold, Mannin and West were among her circle. Even the vicious mood swings caused by her addiction were forgiven.

Later it took a long succession of devoted women secretaries to carry out rescue operations on her devastated relationships — with husband, friends and publishers. Husband and wife eventually reached calm waters. Some friendships, battered too long, too hard by Fryn's irrational suspicions and bewildering volte-faces, could not be salvaged.

Joanna Colenbrander, Fryn's biographer, was the last of her secretaries, appointed in 1950 and maintaining her connection with the household until Tottie's death in 1959. She writes compassionately of Fryn's miseries, tartly when and as she scents manipulative ploys. Herself no mean hand with the pithy phrase ('Fryn's will was the stronger, grinding slowly and exceeding small'), she's packed her biography with the fascinating day-to-day detail of a writer's professional life — fees, deadlines, work methods, inspirations. Chronology emerges with an all-too-rare clarity. She writes particularly sensitively of Fryn's journey towards hard-won marital tranquillity, and movingly of the uneasy love between May King — chateleine, factotum, needlewoman, watch dog and nanny extraordinary — and Fryn.

May was pre-eminent among the many women upon whom Fryn depended. Without her, as Fryn acknowledged, F. Tennyson Jesse could not have come into existence: 'I owe the fact that I have been free to write entirely to May: she has cleared my life around me.' May for her part used language echoing the world's great love stories: 'By September I shall have served seven years for Rachel,' she said of her first stage in Fryn's employment.

Fryn, like her mother, was surrounded by passionately loving women. Unlike her mother, her primary emotional pull was towards men. Her primary political loyalty was to women. She spoke and wrote against the sexual double standard (both Edith Thompson and Alma Rattenbury suffered opprobrium because they had younger lovers; Madeline Smith's greatest crime seemed to be her uninhibited enjoyment of sexual pleasure. Fryn noted the importance of those 'irrelevant' factors in their trials).

She argued for women's right to abortion, denounced female circumcision and took pains to employ women whenever possible — as gynaecologist and literary agent as well as housekeeper. Yet with wary and irritating insistence she always pushed from her the name 'feminist'. Only one — if among the most interesting — of the many contradictions which Colenbrander identifies and explores in her exasperating but compelling subject. □

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Fashion insists that birds, whales, the extended family and Torvill & Dean have cornered the market in nobility, leaving homo-sapiens, ferrets and flying pickets out in the cold; reading these three novels, all wound about the horrors of captivity, rather underlines the point.

Breytenbach is a South African poet and painter, his 'mirror notes' are the fruits of eight years' isolated imprisonment and carry in them — at the risk of sounding seriously pretentious — a sense of 'beyondness', as if the writer had dived to the depths to retrieve them. What he comes up with are themes of mirror images through which to view 'reality', to explore the tough cookies — time, life and death and what does it all mean anyway; a beautifully written, grappling, difficult book informed/deformed by the burdens of knowledge and experience.

In 'The Day of Falling Stars' news reaches town of the existence of a 'boy' running with a herd of gazelle. Confirmation of an 'unclassifiable creature' has to be discussed, the 'academy' decide action/capture is justified, 'the destiny of man is to advance... the need to know is paramount. Or, as some secretly knew, that man must inevitably fall from grace'. The herd and the boy are hounded using the weapon of flashing mirrors, the boy is cornered by his own reflection:

> The Academicians took out their mirrors and flashed them, flashed the authority of death which is the reflection of loneliness. The sun was flooding the vast untamed speckled space and pinpointing, burning with heatless flames the instruments of demise.

'Double Dying of an Ordinary Criminal' examines the morality of writing while detailing the matter-of-fact life/death/life on death row. 'Unwhites' chant out the countdown week before the hangings, other waiting prisoners spontaneously take up the song:

> Every flight of the prospective voyagers' voices is supported and sustained by those of the others... the sound continues day and night... like that of cattle at the abbattoir, the lowing of beasts smelling blood and knowing that nothing can save them now... in this fashion during the final week, that which is fear and pain and anguish and life is gradually pushed out of the mouth...

But, Breytenbach ends his story:

> One is loathe to write too soon about something like the foregoing... I am part of the ritual, the pen twists the rope, from the pen he is hanged... he

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hangs in the mirror... the mirror mummifies each consecutive instant... he thus keeps hanging and kicking in the rememberance...

There is nothing random in this closely written book of notes, some smuggled past the censor out to us; the mirror images both elucidate and confuse; at times it is too obscure to be successful, at others, far too plain to be forgotten.

IT IS QUITE a privilege to review the facsimile edition of **Our Nig** which, when first published in 1859, 'yielded no notices' and would have sunk without trace had it not been for the efforts of Henry Gates, who discovered it in a second-hand bookshop and realised its significance as the first known novel by a black woman. This fact alone makes it important; what makes it haunting is the character and spirit of the woman, her ironic courage in daring the title alone.

The impulse behind *Our Nig* was financial rather than polemic, it is a scarcely veiled autobiography and was prefaced by a candid appeal for help: 'I am forced to some experiment which shall aid me in maintaining myself and child... I sincerely appeal to my coloured bretheren universaly for patronage...' Moreover, the book carried appendices which attested the truth of her assertions, confirmed both the character and authorship of the text and urged black and white alike to buy the book. They didn't and the project failed — miserably.

What Mrs Wilson had to say in her 'Sketches of a Free Black' about the 'enlightened' American North in which she/her heroine lived as an indentured servant was hardly complimentary. The subject matter of *Our Nig*, which contained a mixed marriage and other horrors, was highly controversial among both white abolitionists and free blacks who neither wished nor dared to rock the boat. Her Cinderella story passed unreviewed, unread. The trials of the mulatto Frado, abandoned to the temper of the vile Mrs Bellmont, are the stuff of sentimental tragedy, but true. The much 'enfeebled' Frado escapes Mrs Bellmont only to marry a prince who promptly turns into a frog and is forced to travel on 'among professed abolitionists who didn't want slaves at the South, or niggers in their own house... to lodge one, to eat with one, to admit one through the front door... awful!' Gates's introduction provides a context for the book and details its author's own sad story, a sentimental novel in itself.

Callanish tells of the feathered trials and the final brave escape of eagles from incarceration in London Zoo, is written undoubtedly from the heart and, according to its gleeful blurb, 'has all the makings of another instant international bestseller'. Dedicated to Goldie, caged in London since 1959, who escaped briefly in 1965, and to a Hawk who has suffered captivity there since 1932, it is a rather gooey read with none of the animal edge of *Kes* or T.H. White's *The Goshawk*. The bird personalities are beyond reproach. Creggan, returning to captivity to fulfil a promise does not, shame, peck out the eyes of the curator, but anything anti-Zoo is to be recommended and it does have a wonderfully happy ending with deserving humans and birds flying off into a Scottish sunset — only a story after all. □

THEATRE
Susan Todd

Acting ideas

Literal and over-elaborate, masks curtail the actors' scope in *Animal Farm*

Animal Farm
GEORGE ORWELL *Cottesloe*
Twelfth Night
SHAKESPEARE *Actors Touring Company*
Kingdom of Earth
TENNESSEE WILLIAMS *Hampstead Theatre*

Given that Orwell's declared purpose in writing *Animal Farm* in 1945 was to destroy the Soviet myth, I wondered what relevance his grim warning against revolutionary euphoria could have now, when there seems sickeningly small danger of revived revolutionary aspiration. A staging of **Animal Farm** could at worst connect with the mockery and belittling, currently general, of socialist ideals.

My mistrust was not calmed by the shaping of Peter Hall's adaptation. Its effect is certainly smooth. But very little of the heat of debate, the vitality of differing political possibility found and lost, the ferocity of resistance and opposition, was alive on the stage. Only during the muscular lyrics by Adrian Mitchell and music of Richard Peaslee did I feel the excitement of an audience directly addressed, and challenged, by the ideas of the story. What would have been needed to produce the vitality I missed? I suspect much more exploration, and investigation, of the explosive political material *Animal Farm* presents to makers of theatre. Certainly a lot of intellectual-theatrical stamina is needed to produce, from adaptation, a potent distillation into theatrical image and sequence, with its own and not the novel's dynamic.

This theatricalisation tastes to me a weak brew. The fable is visually reduced to relatively static tableaux. There are constant stylistic references, in the setting and in the use of a child-narrator, to child-likeness, which seem wholly conceptually inadequate to carry the very adult power of the story.

The piece is narrowed down linguistically to set speeches and linking narration, which diminishes the verbal vigour of the book. In the occasional interactions between animal characters force is lost since most of the actors' expressive powers have been removed. Their eyes and faces are largely hidden behind masks and bodily movement is drastically curtailed by the use of a crutch-like device to represent front legs. The physical effects thus seem literal, tortuous and over-elaborate. In spite of the commitment the actors make, as actors nearly always do, to the task of communication, neither vivid character nor the clash of vivid ideas emerges.

Actors Touring Company, on the other hand, convey a sense that the ideas they take on have been very thoroughly investigated. The Company's relation to the many spaces it plays is that of corporate conjurer. It generously demonstrates the power of performance to transform very ordinary surroundings, generating high intensity with not much technical support and no effect of strain in the performers.

John Retallack's direction pays close attention to revealing theatrically precise and specific insights about the play and is quietly commanding. This **Twelfth Night**, for example, presents us with music not as abstract reference but as force, experienced and felt to be actively altering mood between characters and audience. Chris Hewson's and Susan Biggs's composition/arrangements are abundantly varied.

Music merges at times with humour, which also becomes formidable as infectious laughter

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constantly threatens to disrupt all serious purpose. In the quartet of Maria, Toby, Andrew and Feste hilarity breaks out constantly as an effect of resilience and good temper; this clown's shrewd capacity to amuse ensures his ability to look after himself.

The performers are not all of equal weight; but they do each create a considerable individual glow. Each has so fully entered the reality of their character, and of their meaning, experience and function in the play, that I came away curiously haunted, as if each character required me, urgently and personally, to understand a point of view. This effect is partly produced by a high concentration in production style on each performer's rapport with the audience — which can produce occasional uncomfortably glassy moments. I look forward to seeing how ATC will deal with fully contemporary material, when they decide to take that on. The Company can be seen on tour in the Lincs. and Humberside area and in London again in June.

EVER a surprising radical in matters of sexual politics, Tennessee Williams turns **Kingdom of Earth** into a name for some of the more hideous bargains struck between men and women in the name of survival. Lot (David Taylor), unable and indeed unwilling to survive in a world where brutality must be braved, urges his new wife Myrtle (Nichola McAuliffe) to win possession, by cunning or by daring, of the crumbling family estate in Mississippi from his half-brother, Chicken (Stephen Rea). Myrtle and Chicken are both dispossessed, he being part black, she because of her readily victimised condition as a woman. Setting these two in confrontation from an equal zero starting-point, Williams demonstrates how stupid, heterosexual masculinity always wins the prizes.

Chicken has a stupefying confidence, rooted in facts no more remarkable than that he can physically fuck, and terrorise, a woman. The pathetic Myrtle has no equivalent confidence. Lacking the resolution to steal the necessary legal paper, she colludes utterly in her subjugation by Chicken; she believes she can't survive without male protection. She is so genteelly shocked by the bleached-blond hair of the TB case she's married, and more by his unplaceably mysterious sexuality, that she cannot recognise him for the true ally he is, offering her the means to survive without economic dependence after his death. Williams encodes his radical messages to the point of almost total cover, in the entertaining, witty, occasionally awesome dramatic paraphernalia he invented: baroque Southern location, archetypally unstable characters, gripping, self-revealing monologues.

The cast aren't yet filling the bold outlines of the types they have intelligently and imaginatively sketched. Direction by Kenneth Macmillan is unobtrusive, though Williams's plays can now do with more directorial pointing, to heighten the shades of his rather hidden meanings. Tennessee Williams, who died last year, dealt in the unspoken, and what was certainly in 1967 unspeakable. In *Kingdom of Earth* he wittily invites us to consider the terrifying proposition that average, usual, thoughtless heterosexual relations are morally and spiritually horrifying. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Naked I

THE TITLES preceding **Book Four** (C4) look like one of my worst nightmares, that of a room slowly filling up with books. But the programme is great. Hermione Lee is cool and I like the poetry spot being so short. Last week they concentrated on a book of researches made in the Thirties by an organisation called Mass Observation. It sounds sinister, but was actually conceived of — by Tom Harrisson, Charles Madge and Humphrey Jennings — as a way of proving that there was at least a divergence of opinion in Britain over the eternal beauty of fascism.

Subjects to be discussed by the largely working-class contributors included superstition, freedom, sex, party games, dreams and what you have on your mantlepiece: triggers which seem at this distance fairly obvious examples of middle-class frisson-mongering, albeit unconscious. The vexed subject of Blackpool women provided some clearly relished 'quaintness' from the population of 'Worktown', who were under the impression that all Blackpool women are on the make and that their bedrooms communicate with one another. If the propple who holiday there don't know, who does?

It seems the project wasn't quite as altruistic as it appeared. Charles Madge for one was in it for the haphazard and 'surreal' elements, which he connected, like most people in the Thirties, with Communism and the cinema. He should have been pleased with one woman who said that, during the Blitz, she 'helped water greenhouses, pot tomatoes and pollinate peach trees by tickling them with rabbit tails on sticks'. The survey was, as someone said, 'validated' by the Blitz, but it cast doubt on all that elation we hear so much about, muddling through and mucking in and grinning and bearing it. In reality, the bombing caused depression in Londoners, particularly after the 'adrenalin high' of Our Finest Hour etc. Ronald Blythe remembered with a groan the boredom of other people's bomb stories, rather like today's dire morning-after TV plot summaries, I imagine.

'Before the war, everything had to be measured,' said the well-named Servetus Hartley, ex of the Rochdale Co-op and proud of it, on **All Our Working Lives** (BBC-2). 'Tea, currants, salt, pepper. You'd make them up and put them on the counter and if the boss could shake them down, God help you. We thought that if it came in packets there wouldn't be any jobs.' How wrong he was. After the war, attitudes changed. The martinet managers with a chauffeur and a house in Wales suddenly couldn't find staff. Such as they could wouldn't stand for midnight closing and hostel life. 'We didn't know what to do with ourselves in the evenings,' said Rita Greendale from Hull. 'You were so used to going home in the dark, now you could go to dances and the cinema and not only see the last half . . .'

By 1950 there were eight Tescos. 'One customer threw her basket at me when I brought in self service,' said Lord Sainsbury, as if secretly commending her action. 'When self service got going I didn't feel a complete person,' said Rita Greendale. It was old Ted Heath who knocked the last nail into the coffin of small businesses by abolishing Retail Price Maintenance; a piece of pot-bellied philosophy which allowed the multiples to get up to all manner of perversions with consenting manufacturers, the most common being built-in overpricing: the invention of a price which, like a punk t-shirt, is actually designed to be slashed, cutting out the more conservatively-dressed little man.

Forty Minutes (BBC-2) has turned up some interesting specimens recently, among them *Sun City* and *Bertie and the Bomb*. But **O Alien** was one of those programmes that say less about the subject matter than the author's dress sense, in this case flared trousers and mid-length hair. David Gladwell is a suburban visionary who has picked up on the Martian school of poetry and tried to use it on received ideas, which can't be done. Ideas imply values and are not visible to the naked eye, let alone the alien one. At one point an actress undresses in front of us and we are encouraged to suspend a warm and irrational response to her pleasant body in favour of a cold and analytical approach, an all-too-common reversal in this life. 'Even I am not sure which is the real me,' she says, 'the one I see or the one I feel.' She took off a curious brassiere (which occasioned no comment from our Martian) revealing large and attractive breasts (though I'm not sure they weren't cast to be). A man was likewise disrobed and the commentary spelt out the inevitable result of such an exercise: 'At that moment I felt that Michael and I were worlds apart.'

It was a relief when the film laid its cards on the table. Here they are. *Food puritanism*: 'Is there no end to the different things which my species will push into its body?' *Militant vegetarianism*: 'Are you horrified, O my Alien,

Among this week's contributors:

NAOMI MITCHISON's many books include fiction, drama, poetry, writing for children, travel and other non-fiction. Her first novel, *The Conquered*, was published in 1923 and her more recent books include *Mucking Around: Five Continents Over Fifty Years* (1981).

TED HONDERICH is Professor of Philosophy at University College, London, and general editor of Routledge's International Library of Philosophy and Scientific Method.

NICHOLAS JACOBS is co-author of *Bertolt Brecht in Britain*.

ALUN HOWKINS teaches history at the University of Sussex. His book, *Poor Labouring Men: Radicalism and the Norfolk Farm Worker 1870-1923* will be published later in the year by Routledge.

ALISON HENNEGAN was Literary Editor of *Gay News* and now works part-time for The Women's Press.

SUSAN TODD is a freelance theatre director and writer.

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that much of it consists of other forms of life?' (Shots of cows being flayed and disembowelled.) *Neo Hippydom*: 'Shopping and acquiring of possessions an unquestioned characteristic . . . Towns made by obliterating nature.' *Born-Again-ness*: 'None of you can express love for more than one or two other people.' *Doom Prophetry*: 'You know, alien, that time has run out for us.' *A lack of proper respect for the Thatch*: 'A concept called patriotism, Thatcher's "Spirit of the Atlantic" bla bla.' And *A bit of spare time Sociology*: 'It may seem to you that it would be easy for any of them to reach out and touch another, but this is the most difficult manoeuvre of all.' Gladwell might have added that its difficulty is part of its magic, but I suppose that wouldn't have fitted in with his nagging, dead-eyed thesis that our old world is hardly worth living in. 'O Alien, I envy you,' he said, as the alien began to eat him. □

DANCE
Stephanie Jordan

With caution

Royal Ballet *Covent Garden*
Royal Ballet *Sadler's Wells*

It might seem an *embarras de richesse* that four new works, three by indigenous hopefuls, were premiered by our Royal Ballet companies within one week. However, of the material offered, none was cause for excitement, none daring and probably none durable either. By now, David Bintley, young though he is, has considerable company choreographic experience, is guaranteed to produce pieces that are highly suitable and able, in true RB tradition, to turn his hand to ballets in both abstract and dramatic genres. **Metamorphosis** is his 'free rendering' of Kafka's story of Gregor Samsa, his change into a giant insect but chiefly the effect of this catastrophe on his poverty-stricken family. Gregor himself (Grahame Lustig) is not on stage for long as either commercial traveller or hexapod. The early stages of his transformation are depicted physically. He is then observed swinging, much enlarged against a red scrim upstage, and next confined to his room out of which, when the door opens, shines a strong light.

The finances of the family, the plight of the overworked son who supports them, are of no use to Bintley. His new ending: Gregor returning in human form to a more united family, while not subverting Kafka, hardly makes the bleak point about his wretchedness and emotional neglect. But *Metamorphosis* contains a potent dramatic situation, and Bintley's collaborators have responded imaginatively. Mike Becket's set shows first a street scene recalling the shambling crowds of Lang's *Metropolis*, then the stark family dwelling, devised to render its inhabitants diminutive, robbed of privacy. Much of the lighting is brilliant shafts or huge silhouettes — pure *Dr Caligari*. Peter McGowan has conceived a vibrant, atmospheric score that reinforces every shift of the emotional content.

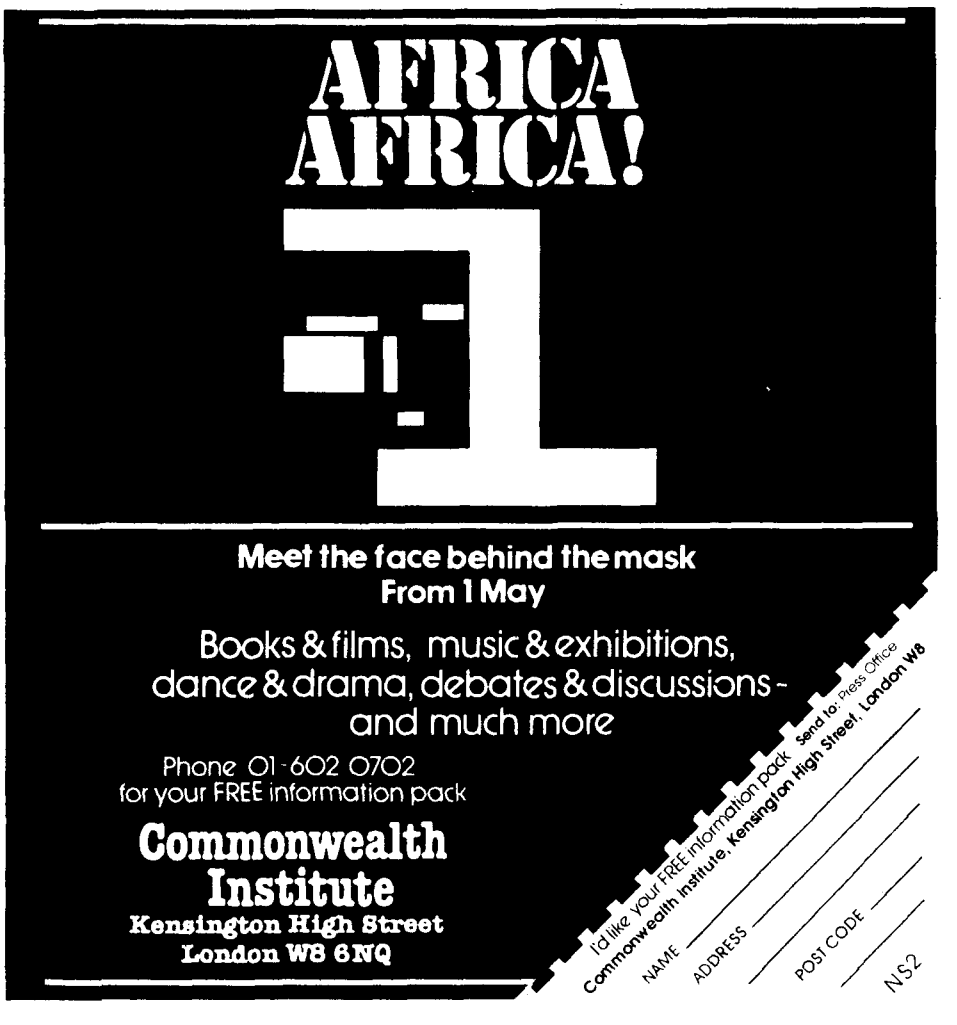
Bintley's contribution is less sure. There are dynamic, well staged action sequences depicting turns in the turbulent relationship between sister (Leanne Benjamin), mother (Margaret Barbieri), father (Desmond Kelly) and the restless lodger (Stephen Wicks). But the alternations of mood become so much a pattern that they eventually do nothing for dramatic continuity. The stillness to which Bintley frequently resorts loses its power in this context. Choreographic language is too limited to sustain either lengthy dance sequences or to create vivid character. We warmed to Benjamin most of all for her good sense as a newcomer, making something of her part, and for her extraordinary suppleness of legs and feet (almost a distraction). Perhaps it is impossible to find an adequate stage metaphor for Kafka's pathetic insect, considerably more horrific offstage and invisible after the earlier faintly comical presence.

Derek Deane has played far safer with his first ballet for the RB. Perhaps he quailed at the prospect of a big company and a big structure after having made so many gala duets. **Fleeting Figures** is a pretty, quite innocuous piece of dancing, neatly packaged forms to Josef Suk's *Serenade for Strings*, with an especially saccharine slow 'dream' movement that had Antoinette Sibley raised like a figurine from a trapdoor and replaced thereon at the end.

Jennifer Jackson's **Common Ground**, her first work for SWRB, is apparently more risk-taking in its sudden jolts from bracing ballet to unclassical wit but this is mere surface detail and illusory. As a series of dances to Lennox Berkeley's *Serenade for Strings* Op 12, it turns out to be as neatly tied up as Deane's work, posing no questions and curiously reprising the music's first movement at the end. Sir Lennox appeared on stage afterwards, so we assume that he approved.

Today's jet-set choreographer Jiri Kylian has given the RB **Return to the Strange Land**, first performed in 1975 by the Stuttgart Ballet. Easily the most obnoxious work of the week, it was an audience success but a disservice to its dancers and to the four piano pieces by Janacek used, it seems, without understanding or respect. Intended to convey the momentous step from one form of existence to another, the two trios and two duets ooze with a high level of emotion. They also treat the dancers as faceless, dismembered beings: Bryony Brind as a poor, gangling thing, all spidery legs swirling in descent round her *porteur*, a knee the pivot point for an uncomfortable *pirouette*, a pair of male palms thrust out to complete a tableau; Alessandra Ferri left perched like a snail on a wall atop her partner's legs — surely a misuse of the bendability and linear excellence of the classically trained dancer. Kylian's idea of a final climax is to set the dancers cantering, jumping and twiddling aimlessly around the stage.

Better to see Brind in the more flattering context of Balanchine's masterpiece **Agon**, ambitious and succulent in the central *pas de deux*. This is an excellent choice for revival, the best RB account of it to date. □



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ARCHITECTURE
Jules Lubbock

Spades and shovels

A MAJOR PLANNING inquiry that will determine the future of our cities in the long-running battle between conservationists and modern architects opened in the Guildhall on 1 May.

A Mr Palumbo, a second-generation property developer, wishes to expiate the sins of his father, the notorious Rudolph Palumbo, by erecting an artistic skyscraper designed by 'The Father of Modern Architecture', the late Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, on a new piazza next to the Mansion House. Mies's reputation is grossly inflated. His shoebox buildings lack all beauty and imagination. To realise this so-called masterpiece Palumbo will raze to the ground a fine group of useful shops and turretted offices in the Victorian-Gothic style which presently curve gracefully around the triangular site.

What gives this inquiry its wider significance? Simply that Palumbo's supporters have chosen to make it a test-case for their contention that 'conservation has gone too far'.

This will become policy should they win, since the final decision is taken by the Minister. Leading the attack are some notorious members, like Mies himself was, of the tear-it-down-and-give-us-the-job-of-rebuilding school of architects: Mr Manser, President of the RIBA, whose abysmal ignorance of the history of planning regulations I have commented upon before, (*NS* 5 August 1983) and Richard Rogers RA, the Cossack of Coin St. Gold medalists Norman Foster RA, Lubetkin and James Sterling also support the scheme. I shall comment upon these comedians when and if they perform.

TODAY I wish to examine Palumbo's most formidable supporter — a venerable scholar whose knowledge of the history of planning regulations is thought to be objective and profound, who is not a practising architect and whom no one could accuse of having an 'interest' in the outcome: Sir John Summerson, doyen of architectural historians and, as a founder of the Georgian Group, one of the pioneers of the conservation movement itself.

How objective an historian is Sir John? Let us examine his account of the genesis of the London Square — that triumph of town-planning, in which private property and public amenity were so well reconciled[1]. He contends that Covent Garden, built between 1631 and 1638, was the prototype. When the landlord, the Earl of Bedford, wished to develop the site, Charles I waived the long-standing prohibition upon new building in London on condition that Inigo Jones, the Royal Architect, designed the development around a public square in the Italian Renaissance style.

It was such a success that all subsequent developments in the West End were modelled upon it. In Sir John's words: 'We owe Covent Garden [and its successors] to three parties: Charles I, with his fine taste and would-be autocratic control of London's architecture; Jones with his perfectly mature understanding of Italian design; and the Earl of Bedford with his business-like aptitude for speculative building.' Music in the ears of Palumbo and his posse of architect cowboys!

But it is not true. Covent Garden was not the first London Square; the Italian piazza was not its prototype. Above all, Sir John omitted all mention of a fourth party to whom we owe the largest debt — the Levellers — whose endeavours had been charted in a remarkable book upon which his own partly depended[2].

From the late 15th century, when London had reached the bounds of its walls, its citizens used direct action to protect their rights to the common fields against developers of the day. To the cry of 'Spades and Shovels' the Levellers came out to dig back the enclosures. The 1580 prohibition on building was a consequence of such action.

Moorfield was the last surviving common field in the City's jurisdiction, and it was preserved by the Levellers. In 1610 it was laid out by the Lord Mayor with the blessing of James I 'as an ornament to the City' and 'a matter of grace and great use for the recreation of our people' with gravel paths, benches and 300 elm trees. This rectangular garden surrounded by buildings was the first London Square.

Subsequently, when open space was threatened, the citizens petitioning the Privy Council in defence of their rights called for the fields to be laid out 'after the same manner as Moorfields'. The Crown usually gave its support, but Covent Garden was one of the first cases where it succeeded in imposing these conditions.

So Moorfields was the model for the London Square. Its form and use of land, rather than its Italianate icing, perpetuated some of the public rights in common fields wrested from the 'covetous and greedy' speculators.

So much for Sir John's objectivity. Ignoring published documents, he gives weight to the powerful myth that great architecture is created by 'great' architects (be they Jones or Mies), supported by the autocratic ruler, the enlightened patron and the speculator. He omits the major role of the people altogether. The Inspector should note that Summerson is *not* an objective historian.

The moral is clear: from Moorfields to Coin St, direct action supported by the most rigorous planning regulations has been the legitimate British way to create, or preserve, public amenity and to compel architects, landlords and kings to serve the public interest.

As for Charles I's architect — when he was 72, Inigo Jones was captured by Parliamentary troops, stripped naked and fined a tenth of his fortune. *Cavete!* Manser, Rogers *et al.* □

[1]Georgian London *J. Summerson, 1946*
[2]The Growth of Stuart London *N.G. Brett-James, 1935*

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2820 **Set by A. Boteman**
Brief extracts please from fiction, drama or poetry by authors (real or imaginary) affected one way or another by recent Arts Council decisions. By 18 May.

No 2817 **Set by E.O. Parrott**
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A huge and hugely competent entry. Congrats to all and four pounds for each clerihew printed.

Of all games chess is the paradigm,
The purpose being to waste time.
It
Does not even help to make you fit.
T. GRIFFITHS

Tobogganing
Is healthier than noggining
You swish round the piste
Instead of being pissed round the twist.
GERRY HAMILL

Karate
Isn't at all arty-farty.
I chop;
You drop.
NICHOLAS HODGSON

Flower arranging
In a society that needs changing
Is, according to Gramsci, objectively reactionary.
Every anemone
Must be seen as a symbol of the bourgeois hegemony.
GEORGE SIMMERS

Those who dabble
In Scrabble
Get to know
Funny words like 'zho'.
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

You cannot share
A game of Solitaire.
If only
It weren't so lonely.
DIDO BAGSHAW

Computer chess
Fails to impress
For a start, the machine is certainly unable
To complain about the lighting or the shape of the table.
CHRIS YOUNG

Rugby League
Induces fatigue;
It may look daring,
But it was always Waring.

Competitive shooting is for
The small bore,
With diminutive charms
And small arms.
WILL BELLENGER

Orienteering:
Peering
At maps;
Alfresco craps.
PETER NORMAN

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10—12 noon **TONY BENN, KEN LIVINGSTONE, DAVID SELBOURNE**
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(tickets sold out)
12-12.30 Procession through Burford — BANNERS WELCOME. Wreath laying at Burford Church. 2.30-5pm HISTORY WORKSHOP on the Levellers at Warwick Hall, Burford. Tickets £1 at the door. 6pm Showing of the film 'Winstanley'. 8pm Levellers' Barn Dance at Warwick Hall, tickets £1.50, £1 unwaged, at the door.
ALL WELCOME

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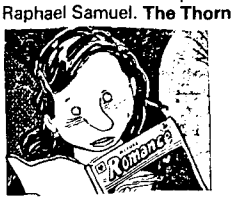

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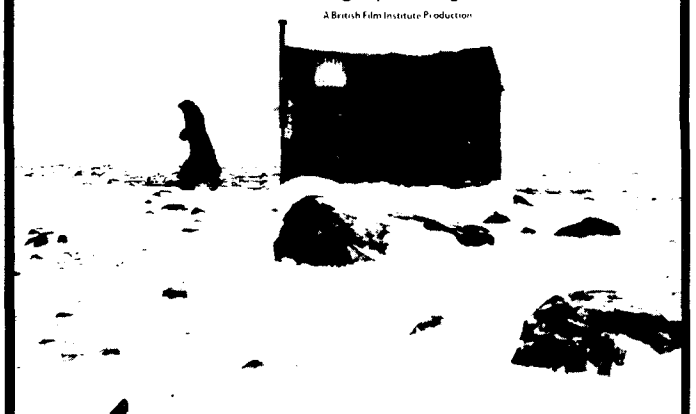
Cinema

THE GOLD DIGGERS U
Directed by Sally Potter
With **Julie Christie** and **Colette Laffont**
Music by Lindsay Cooper
Photography by Babette Mangolte
Script by Lindsay Cooper, Rose English and Sally Potter
Design by Rose English
A British Film Institute Production



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Film at: 2.30 **8-11 daily** 6.15 **3.5.8.11.12** 8.30 **3.4.7.9.14**

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A gymnast displays skills supreme
Somersaulting on the beam
And he can hurt more than his pride
If he lands with legs astride.

CYRIL MOUNTJOY

Squash
Isn't posh;
But don't be misled,
It's hardly got street cred.

JEREMY RICKARD

Bridge fanatics are fearful bores —
But is their condition result or cause?
I mean, is it playing bridge that *makes* them that way?
Or is the potential bridge-fiend just a bore *per se*?

ROBIN RAVENSBOURNE

Rugger's
A game for silly buggers
Who are prepared to risk all
For a misshapen ball.

Professional snooker
Offers lucre;
Even the dimmest of clots
Can make pots.

ROY DEAN

Ping-pong
Followed by a sing-song
Was not, in truth,
What most of us actually wanted in our youth.

WENDY COPE

All sport
Is nasty, brutish and rarely short.
It involves lots of sweat, tears and blood.
And mud.

Monopoly,
Played properly,
Is grist
To the mill of the aspiring capitalist.

D.A. PRINCE

Only falling wickets
Feature in cricket's
TV news coverage; only thus can the medium
Defeat the game's tedium.

MARTIN FAGG

Darts
Develops those parts
Which make a man clubbable
And pubbable.

VICTORIA PLUMB

Zola Budd,
Whose name, in some quarters, is mud,
Was given the run of the place
Because of her race.

NAOMI MARKS

I haven't tried Russian Roulette
Yet.
It's played with a gun
And you don't know when you've won.

GERARD BENSON

Bridge
Is the pig-
eon-fancying analogue
Of the upwardly mobile executive with a rare thoroughbred dog.

NICHOLAS MURRAY

FIRST PERSON

Bill Greenwell

Just like that

FOR ONCE, the tabloids had their priorities right, although perhaps it was the manner rather than the matter of Tommy Cooper's death that determined their banner headlines. Monday 16 April's *Guardian*, for instance, had a pitiful little para., staunchly factual:

Comedian dies
The 62-year-old comedian Tommy Cooper died last night after collapsing on stage during a live ITV show.

I'm glad I didn't see it, glad I was in a locked box on a motorway, far away from the television screen. Of all the popular comedians, he was the one whose sense of the really ludicrous gave me the most pleasure. Watching him work once at close quarters, as a stagehand choking twice nightly in silent hysterics, is one of my best memories.

I've had two quick stints as a stagehand, each time in cavernous theatres designed for capacious crowds no longer really regularly to be found — the New Theatre, Oxford, and the Sunderland Empire — at moments when I was rather funding my vacation than finding my vocation. It's an odd job: apart from the all-important practice sessions, it consists of learning to bide one's time at irregular, inhospitable hours of the day and night, before undertaking frantic bouts of furniture removal. Twenty minutes to twiddle your thumbs, 20 seconds of mad, exact scrambling about.

The stage shows fronted by veterans like Cooper inevitably include the most extraordinary figures. In the one I worked on, for instance, there was an act which had been desperately perfected over a period of more than 20 years. The performer, whose name has long since escaped me, peaked his act by playing the cancan at triple speed on the xylophone, while spinning round and round on roller skates. His wife obliged with some accompanying circusy twirls. His whole life revolved — literally — around this tricksy turn. Doubtless he had twizzled back and forth across the continent in search of lowly spots on a series of strange playbills, whizzing around on splintered boards before retreating down pokey stairs to the dingy interiors of a changing room. I've often wondered what kind of fantasies fuelled his dreams.

The thing about Cooper was his benign idiocy. The bad magician act, like that of the incompetent ventriloquist, is potentially one of the most lethal clichés; but he really rose above it. My first lesson was that there was little that was remotely ad lib. about his performance. Each stumble, each tiny lurch, almost every syllable of his mock-drunken patter was precisely timed; his skill was in making it all seem dreamed up as he went along. The incompetence was fantastically competent. I have never seen an impressionist, and God knows there must be clubs the length and breadth of the country where imposters in a fez and with fidgety hands 'do' their Tommy Cooper, come anywhere near him. It is his laugh that defeats them — in it somewhere is a little gargle that no mimic ever found.

But what also impressed me about Tommy Cooper was that he could have them falling about the stalls and over the circle rail without being even faintly salacious. I shall wait for the mail to pour in at this point, but he seemed to have no need to crack jokes about homosexuals, about skin-pigment, about gender, about circumstances or whereabouts of birth, about politics either. Unless you were a hen, you couldn't take exception to his scripts. Every so often, I find myself reviewing seaside summer shenanigans, in which scores of one-liners are tossed across to determinedly happy families. No matter how much the audience pay to get in, there seem always to be cheap laughs. Sometimes the timing is too good to resist laughing yourself; but there is an itch in the throat afterwards, as if the chuckle had snagged on something.

Not Cooper: certainly not the Cooper who had me doubled up in delight while I waited to rush on and switch some grimy glitter-board around. There were puns so impoverished that you screamed at their simplicity ('Slept like a log last night. Woke up in the fireplace') and apparently endless variations on the same small themes — especially the 'Went to the doctor last week' one. In other gagging acts, doctors are cues for cracks about impotence, Indians. Tommy Cooper simply reeled out a manic string of hot-footling whimsy. There are the old and obvious ones, of course — *Doctor, I feel like a pair of curtains.* Well, pull yourself together. *Doctor, I think I've got a split personality.* That'll be five pounds each. *Doctor, I think I'm a schizophrenic.* That makes four of us.

But his best was the most unpredictably simple of all. Miming the patient, he'd stick his arm up in the air. *Doctor, it hurts when I do this.* Well, don't do it.

There was no copyright on his tomfooling laugh-lines. Most of them are for ever recycled. But I've never heard this one elsewhere. Any children in the audience tonight? *(Chorus of 'yes')* Love kids... went to school with them.

I still laugh when I think of that. And long after the outsize man in the rickety fez has passed into folk-memory, I shall still be grinning for him. □

We apologise for the absence of the film column; it will be back next week.

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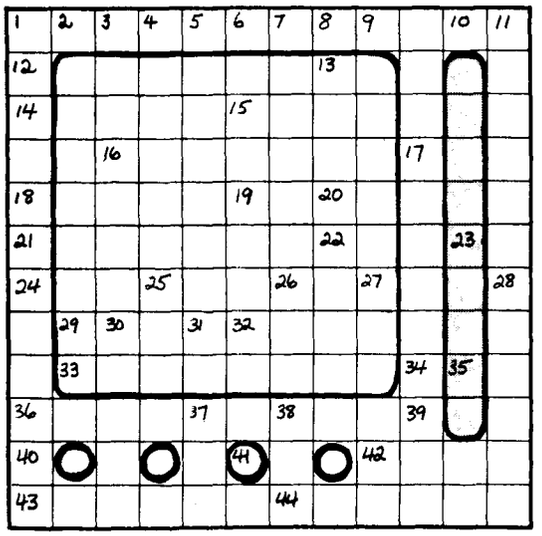
Salamanca 81

'What's On TV'

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 81, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 29 May.



Eight unclued answers are definitive variations of one of the two themewords which appear somewhere in the puzzle. The eight are entered normally and for their unchecked letters solvers can assume I'D CLOWN. Clued answers outside the screen are entered normally, but all others which appear *fully or partly* in the screen have their parts which naturally fall within the screen *entered in jumbled fashion*, the parts outside remaining normal. (The final display will be a short list consisting of things general or specific, past or present, which have had a screening.)

Name _____

Address _____

Note: solution and prizewinners to Setsquare 1437 will appear next week.

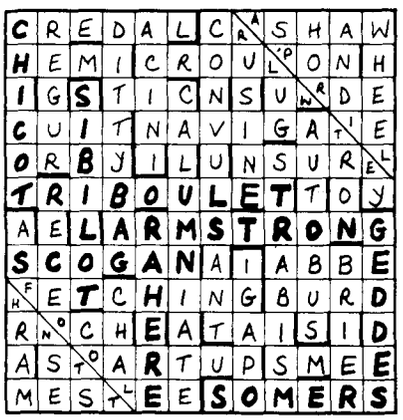
ACROSS

1 Trees that are lacking in their lifeblood? The reverse (4)
5 Soldier, missing at the end, having got wound, may well be (8)
12 They fire a gun (single-barrelled), swivelling about on board (7)
13 Injection causing one to complain no longer from the other end? (5)
14 Tilts yard ready to be drunk? (5)
15 Who'll produce the great 'NO'? (7)
16 This comes within an old lord's activities (3)
18 Buffoon: one's made up of fun man and ---? (3)
19 (7)
21 I use arms to pound? (7)
22 This comes before I have a desire to be unfaithful? (5)
24 Deed that is covered by backing of law, say (6)
26 Aerosol spray: combining with oxygen it could be blooming fragrant? (6)
29 32, when it's dead (3)
31 It could be cote, say, when adapted to 5 (7)
33 One with last child to choose, may (5)
34 From such poisoning etc. one's died for a start (3)
36 Helen's mother died in the field here (4)
37 (8)
40 (3)
41 Old court certain King left (3)
42 (4)
43 Very small, even if in that over (5)
44 (5)

DOWN

1 Concerning little star that twinkles above (5)
2 (7)
3 Predicaments of soft dull fellows (6)
4 These rascals pitch tents on board (6)
5 Sort of coat? Yes, it keeps warmth in (7)
6 Fabric one's put below border (7)
7 (6)
8 Sound of bell with good base ring (4)
9 I may rest showing extremes of leisure against near building (6)
10 Jock's to suffocate from hard mass swallowed (5)
11 Shirt (Scottish) hard to get from extortioner (4)
17 What some gambling man tenders (4)
20 Spenser's realm governed by King and elder (5)
21 This genus has peculiar smell to it, lacking edges (7)
23 Pale blaes or pale blue? (3)
25 Wrenching, rips one apart (6)
26 Women in uniform with no peak to caps (3)
27 King inspires dread as we hear -----? (5)
28 See one with specific time (a lot to kill) proceed reluctantly thus? (6)
30 Barren grassland strangely dead and deserted inside (5)
31 (5)
32 Like the pale Knight of Keats' verse? Time and time again *he* turns up in it (5)
35 Governors found between covers of books, say (4)
38 What is amiss? You want to drink (3)...
39 ... what? A round, you say? (3)

Solution to Salamanca 80



Eight of the classic Court Fools are included in the puzzle.

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LISTINGS

FRI 4 MAY

LONDON 'Remember Bobby Sands!' Meeting to commemorate Bobby Sands death 3 yrs ago. 7.30pm Camden Labour Club, Carol St, NW1. **Org. N. London Irish Solidarity Cttee, BM Box 1320, WC1N 3XX.**

LONDON Theatre workshops led by actress Effie Arestides 6.30-8.30pm every Friday Drill Hall, 16 Chenies St, WC1 rehearsal rm. 1. Fee £2/£1.50 unwaged per session. Of interest to all progressive participants who seek an alternative to drama school training. **Details: 01-387 9639/01 631 1353.**

SAT 5 MAY

MANCHESTER Launch of Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom in North West. 11am-1pm County Hall, Piccadilly Gdns. Spkrs incl Frank Allaun, Barbara Castle, Michael Meacher. **Detailk: Phil Turner, 28 Ellesmere Rd, M21. 061-428 6446.**

BETHNAL GREEN One day workshop 10am-4pm at Library 'Get the Empty Houses used' – mounting a local campaign. Meeting will be addressed by local activists and leading London housing campaigners. Creche. Tickets £1/50p unwaged from **Ross Fraser/Mary Evans Empty Property Unit, HEO, 157 Waterloo Rd, SE1 8UU. 01-633 9377.**

LONDON 'Prisoners' Rights Conf.' 10am-5pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. Spkrs incl Stephen Sedley QC, Geoff Coggan PROP, Reps from 'Women in Prison', Jimmy Boyle. **Details & registration: NCCL 21 Tabard St, SE1. 01-403 3888.**

LOUGHBOROUGH March & Rally for Peace and Disarmament. Assemble 1.30pm Southfields Park. Spkrs, food, musis. **Org. Loughborough CND Loughborough 218150.**

WOOD GREEN 'Remember Bobby Sands and all the Hunger Strikers!' Open air rally 11am-4pm outside Library, High Rd, N22. **Called by London Irish Solidarity Cttees.**

BLAENAU FFESTINIOG Merioneth May Day Festival 1.30pm Park Sq. Meeting, films, exhibition 2.30pm Ysgol y Moelwyn school. Spkrs incl D.E. Thomas MP. **Details: Tony Heath, 72 High St, BF, N. Wales. 0766 830018.**

SUN 6 MAY

LONDON 'Remember Kassinga' 2 plays followed by discn. led by SWAPO, COSAWR. 7pm Africa Centre, 38 King St, WC2. **Details: Namibia Support Cttee, PO Box 16 London, NW5 2LW. 01-267 1941/2.**

LONDON Guyanese Workers May Day Rally 10.30am-1.30pm Ritzy Cinema, Brixton Oval, SW2. Spkrs incl 2 WPA Executive membs. Poetry by Mark Matthews, premiere of documentary film on Dr. Walter Rodney. Adm. £1. **Details: 01-673 3601.**

LONDON MAPAM Celebrations of Israeli Independence Day in Edgware, Middx. **Details: 01-328 2554.**

TUES 8 MAY

LONDON 'Poverty & the EEC Euro Election' Debate org. by UK Forum on Poverty in the EEC. All Party panel of MPs, MEPs, Low Pay Unit, CPAG, Age Concern. 11am Holy Apostle Church Hall, Cumberland St, SW1. **Details: 01-543 5684.**

LONDON 'Broad Democractic Alliances' discn org by Socialist Society with papers by Nigel Kelsey/Mike Rustin. 6.30pm 9 Poland St, W1. **Details: Theo Dennison 01-6982 4998.**

WED 9 MAY

LONDON 'Britain, Europe and Environment' – an intensive briefing on politics of the environment in the Euro-elctions. 9.30am-1pm Assembly Rms, Central Hall, SW1. Spkrs incl William Waldegrave MP, John Cunningham MP. Entry by ticket only £2/£1 students from Green Alliance, 60 Chandos Pl, WC1 01-836 0341. **Org. Green Alliance/IEEp.**

LONDON DUNAMIS Lecture Series 'NATO & Negotiation' no.2. 'A New Agenda for East-West Negotiations' by Elizabeth Young. 1.05pm St James's Church, Piccadilly.

CRAWLEY 'Secret War Plans – Civil Defence & Contingency Planning.' Spkr Duncan Campbell. 7.30pm Civic Hall, The Boulevard **Org Labour Party/CND. Details: 0293 35016.**

FRI 11 MAY

LONDON Gay Humanist Grp meeting in 'Notable Gay Humanists' series. 4. John Maynard Keynes. Spkr Vivian Toland. 7.30pm Library, Conway Hall Humanist Centre, Red Lion Sq, WC1. All welcome. **Details: National Office, 34 Spring La, Kenilworth, Warwicks. CV8 2HB 0926 58450.**

LONDON El Salvador Film Premieres, 'In the name of Democracy' – Life, death, elections. 'Americas in Transition' – US Intervention in Latin America. Spkrs. Jenny Pearce, Donald Anderson MP, FDR Rep. 7.30pm LSE Old Theatre, Houghton St, WC2. Adm. £1.50/£1 unwaged. **Org. El Salvador Solidarity Campaign.**

SAT 12 MAY

LEEDS 'Major Miner Writers' Conf. on literature of the coalfields in 1930's. Spkrs incl Margot Heinemann, John Field, Anthony Gray. 9.30am-5pm Adult Education Dept, Leeds University. **Details: Diane Jacks Leeds 434874.**

LONDON 'Beyond Poor Images' discn. and exhibition 10.30am-1pm City University, EC1. Tickets £2/£1 unwaged from **Child Poverty Action Grp. Alan Booth, 1 Macklin St WC2 01-242 3225.**

SHEFFIELD National Women's Peace Weekend. **Details: send s.a.e to: Sheffield Peace Shop, 51 Leopold St, S1 2GY.**

LONDON (19 May Edinburgh) Delegate confs. dealing with 'Berufsverbot' and the attack on civil and political liberties in W. Germany & UK. **Details: Jack Tyrrell, 265 Jersey Rd, Osterley, Middx. TW7 4RF.**

CAMDEN 'French Economic Policy under Mitterand' Spkr Peter Holmes. 2.30pm Camden Labour Club (upstairs rm.) 4 Carol St, NW1. **Org. International Fdn. Left Europe UK Grp.**

BURFORD Levellers' Day History Workshop 2.30-5pm Warwick Hall, Burford, Oxon. Gerald Aylmer: 'The Levellers – what kind of popular movement?'. Anne Laurence: 'Women, Levellers and Liberty', Willie Lamont: 'Levellers and Religion.' Tickets £1 at door. See Billboard for other events.

FORTHCOMING

14 MAY LONDON 'Masculinity: What it means to be a man in the '80s' – 6-wk-series of lectures by Gerry Popplestone 7pm Working Men's College, Crowndale Rd, NW1. **Details: 387 2037.**

14 MAY GLASGOW Housing the Frail Elderly conf. Walton Conference suite, Southern General Hospital. **Details: Meline McGarry, Age Concern Scotland, 33 Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3DN. 031-225 5000/1.**

16 MAY LONDON 'Parliamentary & Extra-Parliamentary Organising in 1984'. Spkrs. Peter Tatchell, Wilmette Brown. 7.30pm Theatro Technis, 26 Crowndale Rd, NW1. Creche/Wheelchair access Org Wages Due Lesbians. **Details: Kings X Women's Centre, 71 Tonbridge St, WC1. 01-837 7509.**

16 MAY EWELL Non-violent Direct Action Workshop. 8pm Bourne Hall, Ewell, Surrey. **Details: Epsom & Ewell CND Epsom 21348/24055.**

19 MAY LONDON Trade Unions in early Victorian Britain: Conferences in commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Adm. free Congress House, Great Russell Street. **Details: Dr. David Englander for Soc. for the Study of Labour History, Arts Faculty, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.**

19 MAY LONDON 'The Workings of Whitehall' seminar arranged by Royal Inst. of Public Administration for the '300 Group'. Chelsea College, Manresa Rd, SW3. Fees £20 membs/£25 others. **Details: Jane Matthews RIPA, 3 Birdcage Walk, SW1H 9JJ. 01-222 2248.**

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AVON AREA, professional woman, easy on the eye, forties, would like to meet professional man, similar age. Box 8208.

BICYCLING BIOLOGIST, 33, seeks female. Daily escapes London for large garden in rural Bucks. Also likes reading, radio, old pubs and the early morning. Box 8232.

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CAN INTIMATE relationships be equal, caring and still enjoyable? Remaining hopeful despite past pain, male Capricornian non-smoker, (38), seeks woman around Manchester, to risk sharing pleasure, passion and mutual support. Box 8218.

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LONDON MALE English teacher, 1.74m., seeks attractive foreign lady, fortyish, for cultural exchange, travel and lasting relationship. Returnable photo appreciated. Box 8201.

LONDON: MALE
scientist, PhD, leftish, enjoys cinema, theatre, music, literature, travel; seeks non-racist female, over 20. I'm early 30s.
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LONDON TEACHER, approaching 40, interests music and cinema, seeks relationship with left-wing female, in thirties or forties, any race. Box 8225.

LONELY, DIVORCED, social sciences lecturer, 40, tall, dark requires sensuous woman, for loving, lasting relationship, race immaterial, interests music, politics, sport. Own house Leeds. Box 8215.

PROFESSIONAL LADY working Civil Servant, 62, caring, interests: music, painting, countryside, books, wishes meet similar gentleman, friendship/lasting relationship. Congenial women friends also sougint. Box 8229.

MAJORCAN HOLIDAY. Attractive male, Canadian Academic, 40, attached, holidaying Majorca late June, seeks company intelligent, slim woman, 25-50, preferably attached herself, also holidaying alone, for conversation, wine and whatever spontaneity suggests. Box 8175.

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MALE STUDENT, 29, temporary escapee from career, seeks permanent relationship with warm, independent woman interested in places and people rather than things. South/SE. Box 8242.

MAN (30s), intelligent, fair hair, medium height, living Cambs, wants to meet lady who wants children; any nationality, anywhere. All letters answered. Box 8216.

OPTIMISTIC SCOTTISH lady seeks evidence that the following species is not extinct: University lecturer, male, 35-45, high standards, unattached but not averse to marriage. Preferred habitat reasonably non-urban. News of any recent positive sightings welcomed! Box 8231.

PERSONABLE MALE, 54, non-motorist, seeks lonely young female, to accompany him on regular week-end coach and train outings. Status unimportant, happy disposition essential. Box 8221.

PRESENTABLE, PARTLY retired London executive, seeks discreet, affectionate friendship with attractive London Lady, medium build, probably in 40s, who like himself is of equable temperament, good-humoured, non-smoker and who enjoys good food, wine, music and other normal human pleasures, initially for occasional meetings to assess mutual appeal. Box 8248.

PROFESSIONAL, DIVORCED European lady, (Berks), 39, self-aware, humorous, seeks non-sexist, educated male under 50, for exchanging ideas, classical music, books, theatre, gardening, travel (abroad?). Box 8202.

MALE LECTURER, 46, not unattractive, divorced, mainly interested in the arts and social sciences, seeks attractive, intelligent and affectionate female for lasting relationship. Midlands. Box 8238.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 35, graduate, separated, not anxious to remarry, would like to meet a woman who may share interests in books, art, theatre, music, cinema, politics, and even pubs. Midlands. Box 8177.

QUIET IRISH woman, 44, separated, likes walking, films, music, wants to meet warm, interesting, educated man, over 35. Box 8240.

SCEPTICAL, HUMOROUS, intelligent, affectionate man, 34, widely travelled, eclectic interests, still unconvinced by most social and intellectual conventions, seeks woman companion to explore alternatives. Box 8228.

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